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MARX' METHOD, EPISTEMOLOGY, AND HUMANISM

A Study in the Development of His Thought

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For Joseph and Benjamin
who someday may write
books of their own

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INTRODUCTION

In recent writings on Marx one finds an increasing interest in his humanism. This phenomenon began in the third decade of our century as a reaction against the mechanistic and stereotyped image of Marx characteristic of the Second International and of Stalinism.[1] Lukács, in *History and Class Consciousness* (1923), was one of the first to discover this new Marx, and he did so even before the most important of the humanistic writings of the young Marx had been discovered.[2] With the publication of these writings in 1932 - namely, the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844[3] - this new outlook was given enormous impetus.

In these *Manuscripts,* Marx makes the human being the creator and the goal of all reality. The objectification of the human essence through labor transforms both society and nature. Labor transforms its world into a place which mirrors, unfolds, and confirms the human being. This humanism is a complex and many-faceted issue. In this book we will be concerned only with a certain part of it, i.e., the epistemology, method, and doctrine of nature which it involves. Other aspects of it - Marx' concept of alienation and his theory of labor and the state - have been dealt with elsewhere.[4]

The late publication of the youthful *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* - which at least on the surface appeared to differ radically from the already existing writings of the later Marx (certainly in the way they had been interpreted) - gave rise to the question of how the relationship of the earlier to the later Marx was to be understood. Were there two Marxes - an early humanistic-philosophical Marx and a later scientific anti-humanistic Marx? Where could humanism be found - only in the early Marx or also in the later Marx? Were Marx' early writings pre-Marxist or were they the key to a correct understanding of the later Marx? [5] Was there an essential unity to Marx' thought or was there a fundamental break in it? Such issues came to divide Marx scholars sharply.

Most of those concerned with Marx' humanism began to argue for an essential unity to Marx' thought and thus that Marx as a whole was a humanist.[6] Unfortunately, most of these writers have made no serious attempt to prove their claim. The weakest form of argument, which one finds all too frequently, begins with a discussion of specific themes in the young Marx (e.g., alienation, human essence, etc.) and then goes on simply to cite a few passages from the later works in order to indicate Marx' continued interest in the matter.[7] Some scholars cite

passages in which Marx indicates that in his own opinion there has been some continuity to his thought.[8] A more complex argument is given by Sánchez Vásquez who holds that Marx' concept of production, first set out in 1844, is developed and elaborated as the fundamental premise of all history. By tracing the development of this concept Sánchez Vásquez tries to argue that any discontinuity between the earlier and the later Marx cannot be taken as radical or absolute but rather points to a more fundamental unity or continuity.[9]

The main thing that all these approaches fail to do is to study thoroughly the young Marx' concept of essence and its radical implications for his epistemology, method, and doctrine of nature. This will be the primary task of our first chapter. A thorough understanding of these matters will, I think, make it impossible to deny that Marx abandoned this concept of essence after 1845. Sánchez Vásquez takes up a discussion of Marx' early concept of essence only at the end of a long study which emphasizes the unity of Marx' thought. He does admit that Marx abandons his notion of essence in the *German Ideology* (1845-6)[10], but does not conclude that this implies a major shift precisely because he did not examine the way in which Marx' early thought as a whole was grounded in this concept of essence such that its abandonment necessitated a radical new direction.

Frequently, essential unity theorists concerned with Marx' humanism also characterize his epistemology as a social subjectivism. For example, Lukács, Schmidt, Jordan, and others hold that the subject-object relationship is dialectical in the sense that there are no independent objects simply given to us - objects are constituted or constructed by social subjects. Both consciousness and social praxis play an active role in constituting the object (which then reacts upon and transforms the subject). There are no objects for human beings outside the mediation of the social world. For some, Lukács in particular, nature is even a social category. Thus, we know only things constituted for-us, not things-in-themselves.[11]

While it is quite true that Marx in the early writings holds that consciousness is a form of praxis and thus that it plays an active role in constituting its object, the subjectivists are wrong in claiming that Marx continues to hold this view after 1845. As we shall see, in the *German Ideology*, he ceases to hold that consciousness independently transforms its object.

But in order for these theorists to link subjectivism and essential unity, it is not enough that they merely overlook the shift which occurs in the *German Ideology*. It is also necessary that they dilute the epistemological position which Marx held in 1844, i.e., they must overlook the central role which the doctrine of essence had for Marx' epistemology. It is not the case even in the *1844 Manuscripts* that the constituted object is merely a social object for-us such that the

thing-in-itself remains unknown. In the *1844 Manuscripts*, Marx holds that the highest development of a thing is the realization of its essence - what it most truly is in-itself. He also holds that nature's highest development, the realization of its essence, requires that nature be transformed by human praxis. It follows, as we shall see more clearly in Chapter 1, that as human praxis transforms and constitutes nature, as it discovers and releases nature's powers, what appears to human consciousness is not a mere for-us which leaves behind an unknown thing-in-itself, but nature's essence, what it is in-itself.

Since such a concept of essence is not held by the later Marx, essential unity theorists must overlook it in the *1844 Manuscripts*. Many of these theorists tend to rely heavily on Marx' *Theses on Feuerbach*, where the 1844 notion of essence has already disappeared but where consciousness still seems to play a role in transforming the object. It is a serious mistake, we shall see in Chapter 2, to work out from these *Theses* and to read them into Marx' earlier and later writings in order to gather together the elements of an essential unity. Instead, the earlier and the later writings must be studied independently if they are to be correctly understood, and only then can we begin to discover how far along the spectrum of this shift the *Theses* lie.

Furthermore, while it is clearly the case in the *1844 Manuscripts* and possibly in the *Theses on Feuerbach* that consciousness and material conditions interact and mutually determine each other, it is a common error of essential unity theorists (while rejecting 'vulgar materialism' and following - though misunderstanding - Engels' letters on historical materialism of the 1890s[12]) to claim that the later Marx also holds that ideas and material conditions mutually determine each other.[13] He clearly rejects this position in the *German Ideology* , as we shall see in Chapters 2 and 3.

Finally, following Lukács' original argument, most essential unity theorists reject the dialectic of nature and theory of reflection of Engels.[14] Marx' philosophy of praxis, in which consciousness plays a role in dialectically interacting with and constituting the object, is held to be incompatible with Engels' notion of an objective dialectical process independent of us in nature itself and the passive theory of reflection which accompanies this doctrine. But if in fact Marx ceases to hold that consciousness plays a role in constituting its object, then the incompatibility which the essential unity theorists insist upon dissolves and whatever differences exist between Marx and Engels (and there are major ones) have to be reunderstood. Thus the essential unity theorists are unable to understand correctly the differences between Marx and Engels, as we shall see in Chapter 4, precisely because they fail to see the differences between the earlier and the later Marx.

At the other end of the spectrum there are writers who do accept fundamental shifts in Marx' thought, who reject the early Marx and his

humanism as pre-Marxist, and who focus on the later scientific Marx as the true Marx. Most orthodox Marxists fall into this category.[15] More interesting is Althusser who in his book *For Marx* divides Marx' thought into four periods: the Early Works (1840-4), the Works of the Break (the *Theses on Feuerbach* and the *German Ideology* of 1845-6), the Transitional Works (1845-57), and the Mature Works (1857-83).[16]

It should be quite obvious by now that my views are closer to those of Althusser than to the essential unity theorists, at least in the sense that I think there are fundamental shifts in Marx' thought. However, I do not think that the shift which occurs in Marx amounts to a "break" or *coupure epistémologique*, by which Althusser means "a radical break with a whole pattern or frame of reference . . . and the construction of a new pattern" so that any element in the first must have a totally altered or different meaning in the second.[17] Althusser argues that the founding of a new science requires a total revolution in and reorganization of the terms and categories of previous science.[18] While this may be quite illuminating for the history of science, it does not follow that it necessarily describes the internal development of an individual's thought and I do not think that it describes the development of Marx' thought (i.e., the relation of the earlier to the later Marx). Evidence would have to be produced that it does and I am not persuaded by Althusser's evidence. I think Marx' development is best understood as a rather ordinary evolution. In Chapter 3, I will argue that the method which Marx develops for the first time in the *Grundrisse* and which he employs in *Capital* involves an abandonment of some of his earlier views yet at the same time the incorporation of others. In other words, Marx modifies his earlier views in a rather ordinary way. He drops certain elements, keeps others, and molds them into a new method.

The point of trying to establish a *coupure epistémologique* is to enable Althusser to argue that the later Marx is an anti-humanist. Althusser wants to distinguish sharply the philosophical and humanistic early Marx from the scientific and mature Marx.[19]

Althusser argues that the anthropological and essentialist views of the young Marx reduce the forces and relations of production to human nature in the sense that the forces and relations of production become merely the objectification of the human essence - the manifestation of human activity. For the later Marx, on the other hand, the forces and relations of production cannot be so reduced; they are distinct from human relations and, far from being their result, instead are responsible for both establishing and structuring these relations.[20]

What grounds Althusser's anti-humanism (and this is the heart of his argument) is his anti-empiricism. Althusser correctly rejects the subjectivist epistemology of the essential unity theorists but goes

overboard in the opposite direction. His *coupure epistémologique* banishes the epistemological position that consciousness plays a role in constituting the object to the confines of the early writings. Althusser then characterizes the epistemology of the mature Marx as a radical anti-empiricism.[21] Anti-empiricism, for Althusser, means that in theoretical knowledge we do not grasp a real concrete object. We only grasp structures, a systematic connection of categories, not the actual concrete itself. It thus follows that when Marx claims that the forces and relations of production structure society, the knowledge claim involved here, for Althusser, is not a claim about real objects or relations, but about structures, categories, or theoretical objects known in thought. Thus, for theoretical knowledge, the forces and relations of production are not only not objectifications of the human essence, they are not even actual concrete human relations at all. There is a fundamental difference for Althusser between relations of knowldege and relations of the real.[22]

Marx never suggests anything like this. In fact, many passages can be found which contradict this interpretation. Althusser rules out such passages by arguing that in working toward his new science Marx frequently fell back into the terminology and outlook of a science he was attempting to transcend. At such points Althusser comes closer to constructing his own Marx than to interpreting the existing one.

Furthermore, for all his emphasis on breaks, Althusser finds more continuity between the works of 1845-6 and the mature works (the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*), at least in *Reading Capital* and *For Marx*, than I think is there. For Althusser there is a break between the early works and the works from 1845-6 on. The period after the early works is read as a long slow attempt to organize a science and establish a method, i.e., a relatively steady movement to maturity.

In my reading, a radical shift occurs again in the *Grundrisse* .[23] The method outlined there is not the method of the *German Ideology*, nor could *Capital* have been written in the form it was, had Marx kept to the "positive" method of the *German Ideology*. I read the *German Ideology* as an over-reaction to the views of the *1844 Manuscripts*, an over-reaction which had to be corrected in the *Grundrisse*. The *Grundrisse* takes up some of the views of the *1844 Manuscripts* which had been abandoned in the *German Ideology*. These views, which were both tempered by the insights of the *German Ideology* on the one hand and which modify the extreme position of the *German Ideology* on the other, were gathered up in the *Grundrisse* and worked into a new method. Thus the *Grundrisse* brings together in a new way contradictory elements found in the *1844 Manuscripts* and the *German Ideology*. We shall discuss these matters in Chapter 3.

The recent work of Sève is in another class. He admits, following Althusser, that deep-seated changes do occur in the period from 1844 to

1847. He holds that to overlook these changes and simply to incorporate the philosophical-humanistic views of 1844 into the mature science of the later Marx diminishes the latter's theoretical rigor by reducing historical materialism to anthropology. Yet on the other hand, Sève argues, to see the mature Marx as science, to accept a break, and to reject the early works leads to a restricted reading of the later works. It leads to denying any anthropological or humanistic significance to the later Marx.[24]

My views are very close to Sève's. Nevertheless, like Althusser, Sève too sees the period from 1845-6 on as a "continuous effort to master an unchanged domain of the real with transformed concepts", i.e., a steady march toward science. But what is most interesting about Sève, and with which I fully agree, is the fact that he accepts shifts in Marx' thought while at the same time rejecting the notion of a radical *coupure epistémologique* and thus Althusser's anti-humanism and anti-empiricism.[25]

Zelený also holds that there are shifts in Marx' thought. For example, he sees that Marx drops his earlier concept of essence in the *German Ideology*. Zelený also rejects Althusser's concept of a *coupure epistémologique* and holds that the later Marx remains a humanist.[26] However, Zelený, like Sève, locates all these shifts before 1847. He does admit that the *Grundrisse* introduces a new method of analysis, but he denies that it involves an alteration in principle. He argues that the *German Ideology* and the *Grundrisse* have a common philosophical and theoretical standpoint.[27]

On the other hand, the views of Seigel are closer to my own than anyone else mentioned. In his recent biography of Marx, he notices that there is a shift in Marx' thought between the *1844 Manuscripts* and the *German Ideology*, but, unlike Sève and Althusser, he does not see the period after the *German Ideology* as a steady march toward science. Seigel also sees that another shift occurs between the *German Ideology* and later writings like the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*.[28] He sees, for example, that in these three different periods, quite different relationships hold between essence and empirical appearance. In the early writings of 1843-4, empirical appearance is understood as a rather direct realization of an inner essence. In the *German Ideology*, Marx drops the concept of essence and understands reality as surface appearance. In the later writings, Marx again adopts the position that there is a difference between essence and appearance, but the relationship between the two is quite different than he had thought in 1844. Appearance is no longer taken to be the direct realization of essence but rather a veil which hides essence and which must be penetrated by science.[29] I will try to develop these insights even further in Chapter 3.

The important point here is that it is possible to accept shifts in Marx' thought without abandoning his humanism. Thus, with the essential unity theorists, I think that Marx is a humanist but I think this can be shown without forcing Marx' thought into a rigid and distorted unity which causes us to overlook shifts, developments, and differences. And with Althusser I think there are shifts in Marx' thought but I think these can be studied without forcing Marx' thought into neat and rigid periods which obscure his humanism.

For the later Marx, human realization is still the goal but now it is to be brought about by science in a socialist society and is no longer understood as the objectification of the human essence. The goal is much the same but the theory is different. The humanism of the later Marx is an outgrowth of, but different from, the humanism of the early Marx.

Marx' early humanism was closely linked to his anthropology and essentialism. Human beings transformed and constituted their world through labor in the radical sense that nature, history, and society were taken as the objectification of these human beings - as the objectification and realization of their essence. Thus, human beings would be able to produce a humanized and unalienated world which mirrored and confirmed their essence. In the *German Ideology*, Marx drops this notion of essence; nature from this point on retains its independence while being transformed by human praxis; and the forces and relations of production, following their own dynamic, structure human beings and their world. Althusser argues that the forces and relations of production are radically independent of, and cannot be reduced to, human relations. But an unprejudiced reading of Marx will show that the forces and relations of production are simply the result of interactions between human beings in a specific social organization. They appear fetishized short of socialist society. But in socialist society itself human beings will collectively and consciously control their forces and relations of production in order to achieve the highest possible human development. Thus, far from science being opposed to humanism, science is a means toward a humanized world, a world which is no longer seen as the objectification of the human essence and no longer seen as constituted by consciousness but which is nevertheless the outcome of human activity and interaction within a social structure which has been rationally understood and controlled for the benefit of human beings.

Recently, another model for the development of Marx' thought has arisen. In one version, it starts from the essential unity view but then argues that there are fundamental contradictions that run throughout Marx' thought. Gouldner's "two Marxisms" thesis, which distinguishes between scientific and critical Marxism, is an example of this view. Scientific Marxism looks to objective conditions, to blind,

impersonal and necessary laws, and it emphasizes determinism. On the other hand, critical Marxism looks to purposive action and human ideals. It emphasizes voluntarism and freedom. Both of these opposed tendencies, for Gouldner, are originally found in Marx, but they emerge and separate even more sharply in the later Marxist tradition and indeed throughout social theory in general.[30]

Gouldner spends a good deal of time tracing this opposition in the later Marxist tradition. At this level, his thesis is interesting and suggestive. However, his discussion of these opposed tendencies in Marx himself, it seems to me, is less convincing. In trying to anchor these tendencies in Marx' writings, he overlooks the possibility of alternatives to simple contradiction. A good deal of the force of the contradiction model arises from accepting the view that there is an essential unity to Marx' thought. If this assumption were abandoned, many contradictions would dissolve into shifts or changes of mind. Even if some contradictions would remain (and elsewhere I have argued that they do in Marx' theory of the socialist state[31]), we must not assume that these contradictory tendencies are simply on-going and uniform throughout Marx' thought. We must study them within the different periods of Marx' thought and trace their development. These contradictions might be different in different periods. They may be absent in some periods and more or less intense in others. For example, in discussing the scientific side of Marx, Gouldner - it seems to me - over-emphasizes the presence of determinism in Marx' later writings[32], whereas, as I shall argue in Chapters 2 and 3, there is much less of this in *Capital* and the *Grundrisse* than earlier in the *German Ideology*.

A subtler version of this view has been developed by Rader who discusses three different models. The first is a fundamentalist base-superstructure model. It holds that base and superstructure are distinct, externally related, and involve a one-way causality in which the economic base determines the political and cultural superstructure. The second is a dialectical base-superstructure model. It holds that base and superstructure are separate and distinct but that the interaction between them is reciprocal or dialectical. The third is an organic model. It holds that the different strata are not clearly distinct but interpenetrate and that relations are hierarchically structured so that some (like the material conditions of production) are more weighted than others.[33]

Rader rejects Althusser's theory of a break and also the notion that there are fundamental shifts in Marx' thought.[34] He holds that the fundamentalist base-superstructure model is inconsistent with and contradicts the dialectical base-superstructure model, but the organic model does not, in Rader's view, contradict the dialectical base-superstructure model - it refines it.[35]

If we leave aside the fact that Rader accepts the essential unity view and rejects the notion of shifts, then I do not think that his three models are incompatible with my views. It simply becomes necessary to fit these models into the different periods of Marx' thought. I think that the fundamentalist model, or a model close to it, is to be found in the *German Ideology*. This model is then rejected in the later writings in favor of the other two models. The dialectical base-superstructure model is clearest in the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy* and the organic model is clearest perhaps in the *Grundrisse*.

An even more complex and interesting version of this view has been argued by Adamson. In the first place, he rejects the essential unity model. He holds that there are shifts in Marx' thought between the *1844 Manuscripts*, the *German Ideology*, and the *Grundrisse*, and in many ways his view of these shifts is like my own. But then Adamson goes on to incorporate Gouldner's model. He argues that especially in Marx' later writings we find a contradiction between the method outlined in the *Grundrisse* and a strict determinist or nomological model especially visible in the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*. Adamson also rejects Rader's argument that the organic model (most visible in the *Grundrisse*) is consistent with the dialectical base-superstructure model (most evident in the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*).[36] Adamson's combination of shifts with contradictions is certainly more sophisticated than Gouldner's view, and Adamson does raise significant objections to Rader, but I think that in following Gouldner Adamson goes too far. I admit that we find differences, even tensions, in the later writings of Marx, but I will argue in Chapter 3 that this does not amount to a split between two contradictory models or two Marxes.

There is one point of similarity between many essential unity and break theorists. They seek the 'true' Marx. For the former he is usually found in the early writings, for the latter usually in the later writings. We should not demand a 'true' Marx. We should be willing to accept the possibility that there may be many Marxes or many dimensions of Marx. The only legitimate approach to a scholarly study of Marx requires that we decide what Marx is arguing in a particular text or group of texts, that we identify the period through which such positions are held, and that we locate and understand any shifts or contradictions.

The point here is not to carve Marx up into unrelated parts. Nor do I think that I am engaged in a mere academic exercise, though I for one do not accept the usual objections to an academic approach so often found in Marxist writings. Far too often, in my opinion, by bringing partisan interests to bear in interpreting Marx or by moving too quickly to the meaning Marx has for contemporary praxis, Marx' own views have been distorted. In such a context, an 'academic' study has its

merits.

What then is accomplished by focusing on shifts in Marx' thought? Most contemporary students, when they begin to study Marx, find the young Marx, the Marx of the *1844 Manuscripts*, the most impressive - I certainly did when I began studying Marx 17 years ago. By now, I have come to see the later Marx of the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* as far richer and more interesting. Yet, unlike those who have always found the later Marx more important, I do not want to drop the early Marx and claim that the later Marx is the 'true' Marx. I agree with the essential unity theorists that the early writings are a key to understanding the later writings, but for me this does not mean that there is a simple continuity to Marx' thought such that the later writings must be subordinated to the earlier ones or that they merely flesh out the details of earlier themes. The later Marx shifts away from many of his earlier views and goes far beyond them. The point of studying shifts and development in Marx' thought is to reveal the richness of his later writings. The point is to avoid stripping the later writings of important themes found in the early writings and at the same time to avoid reducing the later writings by finding their essence in the themes of the early writings. I hope to show, among other things, that the later Marx is a humanist though not of the same sort as in 1844, that our reading of *Capital* should be regulated by the method first outlined in the *Grundrisse* not that of the *German Ideology*, and that we must learn to read Marx in a very different way than we have been led to read him by much of the Marxist tradition.

So far, I have sketched my conclusions. Now let me try very briefly to indicate the procedure by which I reached them. Any attempt to discuss Marx' epistemology is confronted with basic problems. Marx never wrote a treatise on epistemology, nor do we even find extended passages in Marx' texts which lay out his epistemological views. We find brief statements here and there and we find discussions of other matters (e.g., discussions of essence, historical materialism, and method) which presuppose epistemological positions. The fact that there is also a certain amount of secondary literature which discusses these issues and has come to certain conclusions makes things a bit easier. A beginning, at least, can be made. But any further progress can take place only by finding the right kinds of questions to put to Marx' texts and by seeking an indication of what sorts of answers these texts might allow us to work up - direct answers will rarely be found. Such questions will be reasked in each period of Marx' thought once these periods have been established - though, of course, these periods can be established only by asking and answering these questions.

I have tried to find such questions in two ways: first by reflecting upon the various positions held by scholars who write upon these

matters and, for example, by discovering that different answers can be found to their questions or that somewhat different questions might produce better answers; and second, by trying to view Marx against the background of a philosophical tradition and by trying to ask of Marx' texts the sorts of questions that naturally arise from this tradition. By paying careful attention to what elements of this tradition are present or absent and to the ways in which Marx follows or diverges from this tradition, it becomes possible to sharpen and refine these questions. Furthermore, by seeking to organize as consistent a picture as possible of the results gained through these procedures and by seeking to do so for as many of Marx' texts as possible, shifts and divergences are thrown into relief. The problem of which tradition to use can only be solved by discovering what sorts of answers the questions of a given tradition will allow us to reveal. I have tried to use the tradition of Kant and Hegel (though I am quite willing to admit that other traditions might also prove fruitful).

In order to facilitate matters for the reader, let me at this point simply indicate in a rough and preliminary way the sorts of questions that underlie and that produced the results which follow. I have tried to ask and answer such questions as the following: does Marx accept or reject the existence of an unknown thing-in-itself, and how does he argue his position? How is an object of perception or knowledge to be understood? What is the role of the subject in perception or knowledge? What sort of interaction is there between subject and object? What is the relation of theory to praxis and in what ways is this relation relevant to perception and knowledge? What is the relation of essence to phenomenon or of reality to appearance? Does consciousness constitute or reflect appearance or reality? These questions, of course, had to be transformed and refined as the research progressed. Let us now consider the answers to which they have led.

CHAPTER ONE

The Development of Marx' Doctrine of Nature and Essence (1841-1845)

In order even to begin to understand correctly the theory of knowledge and the intimately related theory of social transformation which Marx held until 1845, we must first understand his all-important concept of essence and what it implies for his doctrine of nature. A careful study of these matters will reveal not only the degree to which Marx' early views are metaphysical but also how far they actually are from a "social subjectivism", which is the way his views are commonly characterized by such scholars as Lukács, Schmidt, Jordan, and Kołakowski, who, however, in other respects differ considerably from each other.

I. METAPHYSICS AND ESSENCE

In 1844 Marx described his philosophical position as naturalism or humanism, a position distinct from both materialism and idealism yet the unifying truth of both. This was still his position in the *Holy Family* where, despite an increased interest in traditional materialism as the foundation of modern natural science and socialism, materialism itself did not amount to humanism.[1]

It has been argued that Marx was never a philosophical materialist in the traditional sense.[2] A materialist would accept some if not all of the following doctrines: (1) a metaphysical monism holding the fundamental elements of reality (which may interact mechanically) to be material, (2) a doctrine opposed to idealism holding all phenomena to be explainable without appeal to a deity or absolute, (3) a doctrine opposed to idealism holding all phenomena to be determined, predominantly if not exclusively, by natural or physical factors rather than by ideas or spirit, (4) a methodological or epistemological doctrine holding that all explanation must be grounded on the empirical and be testable by scientific method.[3]

Philosophers who reject the first doctrine, that all reality is material (which is essential to traditional materialism), and who do not accept the third doctrine as stated (who reject a strict opposition between ideas and

nature, that is, who reject the notion that ideas are not natural and who thus may admit that ideas determine phenomena), but who accept the other two doctrines are often characterized as naturalists rather than materialists.[4] A naturalist holds all phenomena to be natural (most importantly, that ideas, humans, and society are parts of nature), that all realms of phenomena can be studied by the scientific method, that this method exhausts all reliable knowledge, and that human and social phenomena, including ideas, are not to be reduced to matter and mechanical motion. It is sometimes argued that naturalism involves only a methodological or epistemological, not a metaphysical or ontological, commitment.

In opposition to scholars like Jordan, Schmidt, and Hook, I do not think that this characterization of naturalism accurately describes all periods of Marx' thought.[5] At best it describes the views which Marx began to develop in the *German Ideology* of 1845-6. It certainly does not characterize his philosophical position in 1844. I do agree that Marx never held the first doctrine, that all reality is material, and thus was never a traditional materialist. I also agree that after 1841 Marx did hold the second doctrine; he rejected a deity.[6] Moreover, before 1845-6 Marx did not accept the third doctrine; he did not reject determination by spirit or ideas. Thus far his position is compatible with naturalism; but, on the other hand, his method was not empirical and thus was incompatible with the fourth doctrine, essential to naturalism as well as materialism. While I tend to agree that naturalistic elements can be found in all periods of Marx' thought, I will argue that the early Marx held a metaphysical doctrine of essence, incompatible with the fourth of the above doctrines and thus with naturalism. This concept of essence can be found as late as the *Holy Family* and was only abandoned in the *Theses on Feuerbach* and in the *German Ideology*.

By 'metaphysical' one can mean several different things: one can mean (1) a speculative doctrine concerning matters beyond the realm of empirical observation not testable by scientific method; however, (2) Marx at times simply equates metaphysics with idealism[7]; while (3) Engels and Hegel often use the term to refer to the non-dialectical doctrines of traditional metaphysics which characterize reality as static and unchanging.[8] Marx' doctrine of essence is not metaphysical in the third sense; it becomes less and less so in the second sense; but it certainly is metaphysical in the first sense.[9] Moreover, as we shall see, there are two ontological levels to reality for Marx. Essences are located beneath, and actually generate, surface appearance.

Thus I wish to argue that before 1845-6 Marx' method was not

limited to empirical observation and that it did involve a metaphysical element.

II. DOCTRINE OF NATURE AND ESSENCE

Marx' doctrine of nature and essence underlies and has radical implications for the rest of his thought in the early writings. We must begin in this section to understand this doctrine if we are to understand Marx' method and epistemology in the following sections. In an article of 1842 Marx asks: "Is there no universal human nature, as there is a universal nature of plants and stars? Philosophy asks what is true, not what is held to be true. It asks what is true for all mankind, not what is true for some people. Its *metaphysical* truths do not recognize the boundaries of political geography . . ."[10] Naturalism or humanism is a doctrine of nature and the human being's relation to nature which is inseparable from a metaphysical concept of essence. Marx holds that essence (which is only graspable by theoretical reason) must manifest itself in existence or appearance. Only by manifesting itself can the essence be actualized and only thus is existence brought to its truth.[11]

Marx' concept of essence, in certain ways, is like Aristotle's. For Aristotle, the essence of a thing is its form and this is theoretically grasped in the thing's definition. Moreover, for Aristotle, the thing is more properly said to be what it is when it has attained to the fulfillment of its form than when it exists potentially. The essence of a thing is exhibited in the process of development by which its form or essence is attained. However, for Aristotle, the form or finality of a thing is fixed and unchanging, whereas essences change and develop throughout history for Marx.[12]

Marx begins in 1842 to hold that it is need which links essence and existence. Need identifies what is required for an essence to complete its actualization in existence. Need demonstrates that a natural object essentially belongs to the nature of another being and thus indicates what is necessary for the realization of its proper existence. He says: "If I truly love something, I feel that its existence is essential, that it is something which I need, without which my nature can have no full, satisfied, complete existence." Also, "the need of a thing is the most evident, irrefutable proof that the thing belongs to my essence . . ."[13]

The human essence involves a relationship both to nature and to consciousness and it links nature with consciousness. Need, for example, demonstrates that human beings are essentially linked to nature, their inorganic body, with which they must remain in continual

interchange or die. Nature is an essential object of theory (for example, of natural science, art, etc.) and of praxis (for example, as the material and the instrument by which in transforming nature labor can satisfy need). Since the human being is part of nature, Marx is willing to say that it is need that links nature to itself.[14] Essence only develops through a process in which, on the one hand - as Marx begins to argue in 1843 - existence or nature can influence the development of essence[15], but, on the other hand, to achieve reality and power, essence must gain recognition.[16]

Essence must be consciously recognized in order to reach its highest development. Consciousness distinguishes human beings from the animals and identifies the human essence in that only human beings can make their life activity, labor (the transformation of nature to meet need or the transformation of existence in accordance with essence), the object of their will and consciousness. Human beings can and ultimately must become conscious of their species essence.[17] Why is this the case? From 1841 to 1843 Marx argues that essence involves a purposive development in the sense that consciousness must measure existence against essence in order to criticize existence when it falls short of essence. This criticism is necessary for existing reality to develop toward its final goal - for essence to be realized in existence. The way Marx put this in the *Dissertation* was to say that one part of the world, philosophy (which is to say, consciousness or theory), must turn against the rest of the world (or existence) as will, so that philosophy becomes worldly and the world philosophical.[18] By 1844 Marx will argue that philosophical criticism, while it continues to play an important role, is alone insufficient to this end.[19] Existing reality must be actually transformed through praxis if essence is to be realized in existence.[20]

Between the *Dissertation* and the *Holy Family* we can treat Marx' doctrine of nature and essence as a relatively unified whole. However, this doctrine does undergo development and Marx does shift his position on some issues. In the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law* and in the *Holy Family* Marx emphasizes that each natural thing has its own essence which develops in its own way. He rejects the notion that there is simply one essence - as in the case of Hegel's Idea.[21] Marx had been much closer to Hegel's position and to idealism when in a letter of 1837 to his Father he spoke of giving "a philosophical-dialectical account of divinity, as it manifests itself as the idea-in-itself, as religion, as nature, and as history"[22], and when in 1842 he argued that the "same spirit that constructs railways with the

hands of workers, constructs philosophical systems in the brains of philosophers".[23]

Furthermore, we can see a shift in Marx' understanding of the relationship between theory and praxis. By 'praxis' Marx means practical activity which transforms its object or world in order to realize essence - labor or revolutionary action are good examples of praxis. By 'theory' Marx means the activity of thought or consciousness - criticism, science, or philosophy are good examples. However, for the early Marx, theory and praxis cannot be neatly separated. Praxis develops out of theory and it necessarily embodies theory. It requires a conscious aim; it is moved by this aim; and in realizing the aim it allows consciousness to transform the world so that existence accords with essence. Moreover, theory itself can be a form of praxis. It can transform the world, as we have seen that it does through criticism or when philosophy becomes worldly, and as we shall see that it can as theoretical science.

Nevertheless, by 1843, praxis in the form of labor or revolutionary activity is necessary to change the world and to realize the human essence.[24] Earlier, philosophy becoming worldly or criticism was sufficient. In fact, ideas were taken to be more powerful than mass action.[25] In general, Marx' doctrine becomes less and less idealistic as it develops. Yet he never comes to hold that material conditions determine consciousness and not the reverse until the *German Ideology*. We are ignoring other shifts in Marx' thought not immediately relevant to our topic.[26]

III. METHOD

Let us now look at Marx' method for the study of the social world, try to understand how it relies on his concept of essence, and try to understand further this concept of essence. For Marx there is a continuity between the natural and the social realm. Methods of study are the same for each and the development which begins in the former continues and achieves its highest realization in the latter. In either realm the method begins from an essence in its natural form and attempts to grasp its development through contradiction toward its fullest realization in existence. One can achieve almost the same degree of certainty in the scientific study of either realm. Marx says that in the study of the social realm one can achieve "approximately the same certainty with which the chemist determines the external conditions under which substances having affinity are bound to form a

compound".[27]

In the early journal articles and in the early political writings Marx continuously points to parallels between civil laws and laws of nature. The former should be no more arbitrary than the law of gravity. The political legislator must be a naturalist. The legislator does not invent civil laws, but discovers the inner, unconscious law of the object (its essence) and formulates this as a conscious, universal, positive law. In this way, Marx says, civil law achieves an independent theoretical existence like a law of nature. One must begin with the real object and consider its development toward the universal and abstract - its true nature. The essence must be used to evaluate, criticize, and thus develop this nature. Only in this way can the essence be known.[28]

In 1844 Marx applies this method to the study of political economy. He criticizes classical political economy for starting from the visible appearance, the actual movement of private property, and straightaway expressing its laws without explaining "how they arise from the very essence of private property", thus taking for granted what should be explained and failing to grasp the necessity of this development. For Marx, the appearance must be developed as the realization of an essence (originally gotten by analysis of appearance). The essence in this case is estranged labor. The essence of the human being, the human's essential life activity, is labor, but when labor is estranged it gives rise to private property. In the *German Ideology*, Marx will reject this metaphysical approach. There, he will argue the reverse - that it is the development of the division of labor and private property which produces estrangement. Here in 1844, since he is committed to the notion that everything in the social realm must be derived from the human essence, Marx argues that private property derives from estranged labor. Moreover, from this essence we must develop all the categories of political economy - not just private property, but wages, trade, competition, capital, money, etc. The latter are caused by the essence (estranged labor), not the reverse, "though private property appears to be the reason, the cause, of alienated labor, it is rather its consequence ..." Only at a later period is the relation reciprocal. These categories must be understood as particular, developed expressions of the concept of estranged labor. Lacking this approach, political economy cannot understand itself or its object.[29]

As we have seen, essences undergo a process of development and finally manifest themselves in appearance. To understand these appearances, we must see how they arise from an essence, and essences as they develop can be grasped only by theoretical reason. The categories of political economy (e.g., private property, labor, and

capital) must be treated in the same way.

Only historical development brings out the distinctions and the relations between categories of political economy. These categories are latent, but not given, in the nature of things. One side of a relation only develops in opposition to another side. At the culmination of historical development, Marx says, the categories free themselves from their entanglement with natural and social characteristics, become abstract, indifferent to their content, and gain being-for-themselves. Only when abstraction is reached can we grasp distinct categories and develop their relations. Marx tries to explain these notions in the following passage:

> The relations of private property contain latent within them the relation of private property as labour, the relation of private property as capital, and the mutual relation of these two to one another. There is the production of human activity as labour . . . the abstract existence of man as a mere workman . . . On the other hand, there is the production of the object of human activity as capital - in which all the natural and social characteristic of the object is extinguished; in which private property has lost its natural and social quality (and therefore every political and social illusion, and is not associated with any apparently human relations); in which the selfsame capital remains the same in the most diverse natural and social manifestations, totally indifferent to its real content . . . . The distinction between capital and land, between profit and rent, and between both and wages and industry . . . - this distinction is not rooted in the nature of things, but is a historical distinction, a fixed historical moment in the formation and development of the contradiction between capital and labour . . . This distinction only continues to exist . . . - as an essential, important, life embracing distinction - so long as industry (town life) develops over against landed property (aristocratic feudal life) and itself continues to bear the feudal character of its opposite in the form of monopoly, craft, guild, corporation, etc., within which labor still has a seemingly social significance, still the significance of the real community, and has not yet reached the stage of indifference to its content, of complete being-for-self, i.e., of abstraction from all other being, and hence has not yet become liberated capital.

By "abstraction", Marx means that one aspect or characteristic of a concrete thing or process has been singled out historically and all other natural, social, or human characteristics of the thing or process are

ignored. For example, the individual is seen as a worker and all other characteristics of the individual are ignored. Or we abstract from all characteristics of labor which have significance for the community and simply consider labor in the abstract as the source of all wealth. Only when labor in general has actually become the source of all wealth, as Smith and Ricardo finally recognize, can we correctly grasp it as essence and understand the relations that follow from it. The development of abstract distinctions and relations between categories results from the development of an essence which is at the same time a historical development. In fact, Marx is even willing to call it a cosmogony.[30]

The grasping of these categories is the task of science, and the development of science is closely connected with the real movement of society. Science is not only the theoretical expression of social movement, but, just as we have seen that consciousness or criticism are necessary for an essence to reach its full development, so here science affects the development of political economy. Marx says:

> it is this political economy which has to be regarded on the one hand as a product of the real energy and real movement of private property (it is a movement of private property become independent for itself in consciousness - the modern industry as Self - as a product of modern industry - and on the other hand, as a force which has quickened and glorified the energy and development of modern industry and made it a power in the realm of consciousness.

Political economy is a product of the development of private property. It is private property become conscious for itself. Reciprocally, political economy is a factor which has hastened the development of modern industry and made it a power in the realm of consciousness. As in the *Dissertation*, theoretical mind when liberated turns to praxis.[31]

This development involves both consciousness and concrete reality. As concrete reality develops it gives rise to categories. At the culmination of the development, the categories have become abstract. Thought then turns against reality; it has a practical-critical effect. Existence can be measured against essence. In turning against reality, thought realizes itself through the transformation of reality. Thought finds its weapons in reality and reality finds its weapon in thought. In the process both are overcome and transformed.[32]

Marx' method embodies two interconnected sets of factors. The first set belongs to reality itself - essence and existence. The second set

is subjective - theory and praxis. What Marx calls objectivity requires a relationship between both sets. One or the other will not produce objectivity.

Even before or apart from the human being, essence realizes itself through a process of development in the act of existing.[33] Development, Marx argued in 1843, can be determined by existing conditions which, however, are constantly transformed as the essence is realized.

In 1844 Marx argues that alienated labor, taken as an essence, is the cause of private property. Only later does the relationship become reciprocal. Marx often qualifies his claim that alienated labor is an essence by calling it the *subjective* essence.[34] In doing so Marx moves to the set of subjective factors - theory and praxis - without which essence cannot realize itself in its highest form. The development of essence to existence is grasped in theory, for example, by political economy. Theory itself affects, hastens, this development. However, theory alone is not enough. In the early journal articles theory was an adequate form of praxis. Philosophy or criticism could change the world. But by 1843 transformation of the world through industrial or revolutionary praxis is also necessary if essence is to be realized in existence.

Objectivity is produced by a relationship between both sets of factors. Theory and praxis, their particular form and content as well as their aim and effectiveness in transforming essence into existence, will be determined by the specific relation of essence to existence given in the actual world. Reciprocally, the relation of essence to existence will ultimately be determined by theory and praxis. Essence will manifest itself in existence through the transformative activity of theory and praxis.[35]

In the *German Ideology* Marx ceases to employ the concept of essence. He speaks only of the historical transformation of the existing world. He does keep the concepts of theory and praxis and holds that all development is a result of their interaction, but he holds that existing conditions and praxis determine theory, not the reverse.[36] This is not the view of 1844 where the relationship between the two sets of factors can be quite varied. Ultimately they are equal and codetermining, but until then it is quite possible for the ideal side (theory and essence) to predominate. For example, in the 'Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law', essence appears primarily through theory. German theory (philosophy) which grasps the human essence as freedom is far in advance of existing conditions or praxis. Far from being problematic, this is the key to revolution in Germany. Far from

arguing that existing conditions and praxis predominate in determining theory and essence, Marx holds that the latter factors are at least as important in producing revolution as the former. Theory, correctly formulated for the specific context of the given relation of essence to existence, will answer practical needs; revolution will result. In the *German Ideology* Marx takes up the same topic but struggles to subordinate theory to material conditions which, Marx now argues, give rise to and determine such advanced theory as well as historical development and revolution.[37] In 1844, essence may also operate primarily through praxis. Estranged labor is the essence and cause of all the categories of political economy. Essence operating through praxis constitutes the existing world and gives rise to theory.

To gain objectivity the method cannot operate solely at the level of essence and existence, i.e., at a purely ontological or metaphysical level. It would miss the subjective role of human beings whose theory and praxis are responsible for the realization of their own essence. Nor can the method operate only at the level of theory and praxis. It would abandon its ontological ground and would result in a social subjectivism. The ultimate and harmonious relation of these two sets of factors will be found in the unalienated objectification of labor. We will get to this shortly.

IV. EPISTEMOLOGY

We have already seen that human consciousness is necessary for an essence to reach its fullest development. This requires of Marx an epistemology compatible with his doctrine of nature and essence. Thus, in this section we must try to understand the relationship of knowledge and perception to nature and natural essences. However, things are rather complicated here. Marx holds that human beings are parts of nature. It follows then that the development of the human essence is also a development of nature's essence. Moreover, since essences in general require human consciousness for their highest development, human knowledge, perception, and praxis are necessary not only for the realization of the human essence but for the realization of nature's essence as well. And reciprocally, since human beings are parts of nature, the realization of nature's essence (assisted by human consciousness) is also necessary for the realization of the human essence. There is an intimate connection between human beings and nature, and, as we shall come to see, nature tends to get absorbed into the human essence.

In 1844, Marx holds that an object of human sensuousness must be a human object; the object must be an objectification of the human essence. Consciousness seeks an identity between itself and its object. It reflects in theoretical shape the reality of nature and confirms existence in thought. But at the same time, being confirms itself in consciousness by coming to exist as thinking being. Since the human being is a part of nature, nature is linked to itself through the mediation of human consciousness. In the *Dissertation*, Marx ascribed this view to Epicurus: "Thus in hearing, nature hears itself . . . in seeing it sees itself. Human sensuousness is therefore the medium in which natural processes are reflected as in a focus and ignited into the light of appearance." Marx himself holds a similar view in the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*; he says that an essence's differentiation into opposites is a process of self-cognition. He also says: "that a man's physical and spiritual life is linked to nature means simply that nature is linked to itself, for man is a part of nature".[38]

In 1844 these obscure notions become a bit clearer. Through labor the human being transforms the world of nature such that it appears as the human being's work and reality. Marx says: "It is just in his work upon the objective world, therefore, that man really proves himself to be a species-being . . . Through this production, nature appears as his work and reality. The object of labour is, therefore, the objectification of man's species life: for he duplicates himself not only, as in consciousness, intellectually, but also actively, in reality, and therefore sees himself in a world he has created."[39] Human beings realize their essence in nature and, as we shall see, nature realizes its essence in human beings. Both occur through the objectification of labor.

Marx' concept of an object is a peculiar one. Any natural being, Marx holds, has its object outside itself. If it did not, it would be a non-being. This relation is described as sensuousness. To be sensuous is to be conditioned by, and dependent upon, objects. Marx' concept of sensuousness, however, is much broader than for most philosophers. Plants are sensuous, and sensuousness includes not merely the activity of the five senses but also thinking, experiencing, wanting, acting, loving, and willing, i.e., almost any essential relation to an object.[40]

An object is an existing entity essentially necessary to the continuation, development, or realization of another entity. This relation is expressed as need, e.g., hunger indicates an entity's essential need for food as its object. However, objective relations are not restricted to the human realm and do not always require consciousness (though they ultimately do). Marx says: "The sun is the object of the

plant - an indispensable object to it, confirming its life - just as the plant is an object of the sun, being an expression of the life-awakening power of the sun, of the sun's objective essential power." What does this mean? To say that the sun is the plant's object is to say that the plant needs the sun in order to grow. The sun is essential to the plant's development. But, reciprocally, the plant is also the sun's object. What does this mean? How does the sun need the plant? For Marx, an object can also be an existent entity needed for the realization and expression of the essential powers of another entity - the plant is needed by the sun, is the sun's object, because the plant realizes and expresses the life-awakening power of the sun. If we now translate this to the human realm, we would have to say that nature is the human being's object - human beings require nature to satisfy their needs as well as to carry on the labor process through which their essential powers are realized. But we would also have to say, odd as it sounds, that the human being is nature's object - nature needs human beings because nature realizes itself in human beings as nature's highest actualization. If I have an object, the object has me as its object.[41]

On the other hand, objectification is the process of constituting an object. It is a form of praxis. It involves the exercise of practical powers and the realization of theory or ideas. Individuals only actualize these powers and ideas by realizing through them a concrete object that embodies and expresses these powers and ideas. Only in this way is it possible for raw material to be constituted into an object satisfying specific needs. Because the object is an embodiment, realization, and expression of powers and ideas and because it satisfies needs, it reflects, mirrors, the human essence. It makes essence "visible to the senses".[42]

In the same process nature is transformed so that its forces are unfolded and allowed to express further their life-developing powers. Through the labor process nature is actualized. Nature is allowed to realize its highest development - human nature. Nature needs human activity and consciousness for its realization and for its reflection in consciousness. Human beings need nature for the realization of their powers and ideas and for their reflection in nature:

> The nature which develops in human history . . . is man's real nature; hence nature as it develops through industry . . . is true anthropological nature . . . . History itself is a real part of natural history - of nature developing into man . . . . The history of the world is nothing but the creation of man through human labour, nothing but the emergence of nature for man . . . man has thus

> become evident for man as the being of nature and nature for man as the being of man . . .

In this passage, Marx is clearly saying that labor transforms external nature as well as human nature. But he is also saying that in this process, nature - external nature - develops into the human being. It emerges "for man as the being of man". Earlier Marx said: "Only here has what is to him his natural existence become his human existence, and nature become man for him. Thus society is the complete unity of man with nature - the true resurrection of nature - the accomplished naturalism of man and the accomplished humanism of nature."[43] Nature objectifies itself, realizes its essence, in the human being.

We are led to wonder whether we must attribute some form of consciousness to nature. Must we say that nature strives toward consciousness? [44] We must always remember that the human being is a part of nature. Thus there is a conscious and an unconscious part of nature. The proper distinction is really between thought and being rather than between human beings and nature (though it is very difficult to avoid the latter terminology). Thus it can be said that in the human being's hearing, nature hears itself, or that, just as thought seeks to realize itself, so "reality must itself strive toward thought". [45]

Marx holds that the highest development of a thing is its essential and most natural form. "Man always regards as his highest essence that which is his true essence."[46] Nature's realization, its highest development, is the human being. In the human being nature becomes conscious of itself. The realization of true human nature is also the true realization of nature. Nature emerges into being for humans because human beings constitute the being of nature through labor and industry. Nature strives for and comes to consciousness only because of human activity and consciousness. Yet at the same time, consciousness is an essential and the highest part of nature because human beings are a part of nature.[47]

Labor transforms nature in two ways. It transforms natural objects and it transforms the subject. These two developments are dialectically interdependent. Human beings must transform nature in order to produce objects which satisfy need. The particular character of the need-satisfying object will be determined by the specific subjective factors brought into play in producing an object expected to satisfy given needs. The level to which these subjective factors have developed will be determined in part by the demands exerted by the existing level of need, but in part the level which the subjective factors

have reached will determine the level to which needs can have evolved. The regular satisfaction of given needs will transform the subject by allowing needs to be perceived differently or for new needs to be perceived. The labor process - by requiring the employment of powers, perceptions, and ideas - will exercise and develop these subjective factors. Such development will also allow needs to be perceived differently or new needs to arise. New or transformed needs will demand a more complex labor process, the development of new tools, and a more extensive transformation of nature. Accomplishing this will again give rise to a further transformation of the subject. In this process nature comes to itself, to its highest development, the human being, and human beings are able to realize and contemplate themselves in their object. For the senses to appropriate the object adequately the object must have been humanized. It must have been transformed by human labor so that human beings have objectified themselves in it. At the same time, the significance of the object can go no further than the human being's subjective capacity to perceive it. Marx says:

> man does not lose himself in his object only when the object becomes for him a human object . . . all objects become for him the objectification of himself . . . The manner in which they become his depends on the nature of the object and on the nature of the essential power corresponding to it . . . . Just as only music awakens in man the sense of music, and just as the most beautiful music has no sense for the unmusical ear - is no object for it . . . - it can therefore only exist for me insofar as my essential power exists for itself as a subjective capacity; because the meaning of an object for me goes only so far as my sense goes . . . Only through the objectively unfolded richness of man's essential being is the richness of human sensibility (a musical ear, an eye for beauty of form . . .) either cultivated or brought into being. For not only the five senses but also the so called mental senses, the practical senses . . . come to be by virtue of its object, by virtue of humanized nature. The forming of the five senses is a labour of the entire history of the world down to the present.[48]

The senses are developed by the development of the object, by the response which a new object (e.g., an original development in art or technology) can stimulate in the subject, and in part the senses are developed by being exercised in the process of production and perception of objects. These moments, the constitution of the object and of the subject, develop in dialectical interaction. The subject is

developed by employing and objectifying its powers and ideas. The object comes into being through the subject's productive activity and through the subject's capacity to perceive the object. The object reacts upon and develops the subject.[49]

a. Objective Perception

Failing to understand the radical metaphysical implications which his concept of essence has for his doctrine of nature, many scholars characterize Marx' epistemology as a social subjectivism. They hold that knowledge is possible only of objects socially constituted for-us, not of things-in-themselves and not of nature which has not been socially transformed by human labor. These are not, I shall try to show in this and the following section, positions which Marx held.

Contrary to the reading of Kołakowski, Jordan, and Schmidt, it is quite clear that Marx rejects the concept of an unknown thing-in-itself.[50] In the *Dissertation* Marx contrasted the view of Epicurus, for whom the senses were the objective criteria of nature, to the view of Democritus, for whom sensuous reality was subjective semblance.[51] Moreover, we later see that Marx rejects the view of Democritus in which "Time excluded from the world of essence is transferred into the self-consciousness of the philosophising subject but does not make any contact with the world itself." He prefers the view of Epicurus, for whom "Time, excluded from the world of essence, becomes . . . the absolute form of appearance." Time is "the reflection of appearance in itself, the nature of appearance is . . . justly made the real criterion of nature." Thus, "human sensuousness is therefore embodied time, the existing reflection of the sensuous world in itself." For Epicurus the senses are the medium in which nature *in-itself* appears to itself and thus becomes objective. No unknown thing-in-itself remains. To eliminate an unknown thing-in-itself while still holding that the form of appearance is determined by human sensuousness, one must hold that nature's essence is only realized (nature only becomes what it truly is) by appearing - manifesting itself in existence. While quite vague in the *Dissertation*, the form of appearance, the form in which essence must appear, is time, and time is determined by (or embodied in) human sensuousness. Time is change as change. It is in this way that nature appears to itself, via sensuousness, as change.[52]

In 1844 Marx does not explicitly discuss time. Nevertheless, the form of appearance, the form in which the essence must appear, still

involves transformation or change. In 1844 this form is determined by human labor.[53] Labor transforms the object as well as the subject and allows the essence of each to be manifest in appearance.

Nature comes into being as the historical product of the human being's labor. Nature must undergo this development to realize itself.[54] Nature as it presents itself in its immediate, directly given form is not a human object. It is not adequate to perception. It is nothing for the human being. Nor is sense in its immediate, undeveloped form adequate or objective.[55] Objectivity requires the development of both the subject and the object. In a passage written in 1844 which is often overlooked or ignored, Marx says: "If man's feelings, passions, etc., are not merely anthropological phenomena in the narrower sense, but truly ontological affirmations of essence (of nature), and if they are only really affirmed because their objects exist for them as sensual object, then it is clear that . . . [t]hey have by no means merely one mode of affirmation . . . " In other words, for Marx, sensuousness is not merely an anthropological affirmation of nature, a subjective grasping of nature for-us, but an ontological affirmation of the essence of nature, a grasping of the in-itself. Marx also says elsewhere that "sensuousness . . . is the essence of nature" and that "the real existence of man and nature has become evident in practice, through sense experience, because man has thus become evident for man as the being of nature, and nature as the being of man". Marx is even willing to call the dialectical development of subject and object a cosmogony. It is a historical becoming, an essential realization, an actual creation, of nature and the human being.[56]

To hold that the form of appearance is determined by the subject while claiming that perception is objective - in other words, to avoid the unknown thing-in-itself of either empiricist subjectivism or Kantian phenomenalism - Marx must hold two doctrines: (1) that the form of appearance is determined by human theory and praxis, and (2) that nature can only realize itself, become what it truly is, by objectifying its essence in appearance. "Sensuousness . . . is the essence of nature."[57]

In 1844, original untransformed nature in-itself does not have ontological priority - certainly not in the sense that essence is truly realized in nature's original untransformed state. If this were the case, human perception of transformed nature would be perception of a mere anthropological appearance, and original nature might remain an unknown thing-in-itself. Instead, Marx is holding that the higher development of an essence is a higher realization of the thing-in-itself, and that a higher development of human subjectivity means a higher

ontological grasp of the thing-in-itself. An essence *is*, most truly, what it *becomes*. The transformation of nature is not a divergence from its original truth but a development toward its truth.[58]

This is not to say that all perception is an ontological affirmation of reality. The manner of objectification determines how reality is reflected. If objectification is alienated, an alienated object will be reflected. This will not be an ontological affirmation of reality or of the senses, but it will constitute an accurate indication of existing reality. It will indicate the actual relation of essence to appearance as it has developed in alienation. While estrangement may be a necessary stage in the realization of essence, need will ultimately indicate how existence must be transformed so that estrangement is overcome and essence mirrored in existence.[59]

b. Constitution and Reflection

Scholars like Lukács, Rotenstreich, and Petrović argue that in Marx' theory of perception the object is constituted. They reject a view defended by others - a copy theory or a theory of reflection.[60] It follows then, that perception is unable to copy or reflect things as they are in-themselves; we only perceive things as they are constituted for-us. In opposition to this, I shall argue in this section that Marx holds and needs elements of both theories.

The positive value of German Idealism, Marx tells us, was its emphasis on the active role of the subject. But German Idealism held that the object was constituted by consciousness alone. Thus the object essentially remained within consciousness.[61] For Marx, an object is not constituted solely through an act of individual perception, as for Kant, nor by a cultural consciousness, as for Hegel. The constitution of an object in perception is part of a larger constitution through labor.[62] Labor transforms nature, the cognized object, as well as the senses, the cognizing subject. The process cannot be understood by focusing on cognition alone. The object and process of cognition can only be understood as part of the process of the objectification of labor.

On the other hand, the positive value of materialism, Marx tells us, was its emphasis on objective sense perception. But traditional materialism was unable to establish this position adequately. All knowledge does involve sense experience of the world, but materialism did not recognize that the world and the subject are being transformed continuously.[63]

However, as we have seen, this transformation does not result in the constitution of an in-itself into a for-us such that an unknown thing-in-itself remains, as for Kant. Nor does it mean, as is often claimed, that an object untransformed by labor cannot be known. In this sense, I will argue, our perception actually mirrors or reflects the object in-itself.

Marx' view in 1844 is that, as far as ordinary experience goes, immediate untransformed nature for the most part disappeared long ago in history. Guided by developing needs, industry has transformed nature and constituted it into objects for-us. Our senses have been transformed in the same process. There is evidence that this has involved a constitution. If either the natural or the subjective side has not been developed, a meaningful object is not constituted. For example, given the development of an object (a new piece of technology, music, or art) without a corresponding development of the subject (a class whose conditions have not given rise to the development of sensitivities to music, art, or technology[64]), the object will not be an object for the subject. It will have little or no significance for the subject. The same will be true if the subject has been developed but the object has not (original untransformed nature). The object will have little or no significance for the subject. The object as well as the subject are constituted socially and historically, and this constitution must be operating in each act of perception.[65]

Nevertheless, an undeveloped subject who finds music insignificant will still hear it (and most likely hear it as music). Likewise a developed subject who finds untransformed nature insignificant will still perceive it (and as nature). Thus there must be a mirroring or reflection.[66]

Marx does say that pre- or extra-human nature untransformed by human labor is nothing for the human being, and it has been argued, for example by Schmidt, Kołakowski, and Jordan, that if nature has not been labored upon it cannot be known.[67] Marx argues in 1844 that we cannot ask about the creation of nature or of human beings by a deity, but he also seems to imply that aside from creation by a deity we cannot even ask about nature before human beings or about the origin of human beings in nature.[68] This is the case because human beings and nature emerge for human beings only through labor. Nevertheless, Marx himself certainly talks about nature's development before or independently of human beings. He argues that nature influenced the original development of human beings. He argues that geognosy (the study of the development of the earth long before human beings) shows

that the earth's process of generation was a self-generation, and importantly, that geognosy thus establishes one of the major arguments against creation by a deity. Marx also refers to what he calls the problem of meteorology (the theory of elements, celestial bodies, and their processes remote from human influence).[69] Furthermore, an objective relationship between sun and plant exists without human influence. Thus untransformed nature is something for human beings. We can speak of: (1) nature alone and independent before or beyond human influence, (2) the original development of human beings out of and in interchange with nature (human history is a part of natural history[70]), and (3) a higher development of nature and human beings which involves the transformation and realization of both. Of course, these are not three neat periods; they can interact unevenly.

Thus, it is clear that Marx' position involves two claims, which at least seem incompatible. He holds that knowledge or perception involves a process of constitution through labor and yet he holds that unlabored upon nature is knowable and thus in some sense it would be mirrored or reflected. The problem is to explain the compatibility of constitution and reflection as well as the relationship that holds between them.

Leaving aside untransformed nature for a moment, the first thing we must notice is that the object, even when it is constituted, is not a mere representation. Marx rejects Hegel's view that the object is a mere object-of-consciousness, and insists that the object is independent of us and outside our consciousness. He says that to be a sensuous being means to have objects which "exist outside him, as objects independent of him . . . "[71] Thus, even when transformed and constituted by labor, the object must, since it is outside consciousness, be mirrored or reflected in our consciousness.

We can begin by saying then that the way the object is mirrored in consciousness is determined by the way the object has been constituted, and reciprocally that the process of constitution is conditioned by the level of needed objects and the way they are mirrored in consciousness. The process of constitution involves the transformation of nature into objects which satisfy needs and which objectify the human essence at the level of development which needs and essence have reached in history. The object will have meaning or significance in so far as it satisfies our needs and objectifies our essence at this level and thus can be mirrored in our consciousness as an object appropriate to our needs and essence. At the same time, the level of our needs and the way needs and need-satisfying objects are perceived or mirrored in our consciousness will condition the way we constitute objects through

labor. Thus Marx says that the senses are theoreticians in their praxis.[72] They reflect theoretically within an active constituting praxis.

It has been suggested that constitution, for Marx, is of the Kantian sort in the sense that if it did not adequately occur we would be left with "merely a blind play of representations, less even than a dream". Calvez, for example, holds that without the human being, nature would be undifferentiated, senseless chaos.[73] Must such a Kantian constitution be presupposed to explain, for example, the possibility of perception by the first human beings? Would they, as it were, be blind until they had constituted their world through labor? Marx would not accept such a view. He even holds that the objective relation between entities like the sun and plants is sensuous, and obviously animals are sensuous. At that specific point in evolution where we decide to call a being human, there would already have been a long history of the development of sensuousness involving a dialectical development between subject and object and between reflection and constitution. The immediate problem would not be to explain the possibility of perception, but to identify the specific level which the relation between subject and object and between reflection and constitution had reached.

Much the same approach might be adopted to explain the development of a child's perception. The child's first needs, feelings, and relations to independent objects would be examples of sensuousness in the general sense but not in the strict and limited sense employed by most epistemologists. Development from the former to the latter (to perception proper) would be stimulated by socially developed objects presented to the child. The child's needs and relations would thus slowly be conditioned in socially mediated ways. These factors would also influence the child's developing operations on and interactions with its objects. Perception would emerge, be trained, and cultivated.

But how do we explain the general nature of the earliest form of sensuousness which exists before the development of perception proper? We must recognize that to accept a doctrine of constitution while at the same time rejecting an unknown thing-in-itself (since it must not result in a Hegelian idealism where, as Marx says, the object is not an independent object but merely an object within consciousness) would require that even without constitution an object would have to be mirrored. Since the object is independent of us, the child and even prehumans would have to mirror the object for the process of sensuousness to begin and for perception proper to start developing through interaction with the object and labor upon it. Thus, we can see the importance of Marx' admission that we can know untransformed

nature.

The relationship between constitution and reflection then is that any object must be mirrored or reflected whether it has been transformed by labor or not. Even a constituted object, since it is independent of us, must be reflected. But the significance that object will have for us, the degree to which it satisfies our needs and essence, depends upon the way the object has been constituted by labor and this depends upon the level to which our sensitivities, needs, and essence have been historically developed when they were objectified in the object. Constitution is not necessary to make reflection possible, but it is necessary to make reflection of a significant or meaningful object possible. Reflection itself will not produce significance.

However, it might still be possible to argue against the reflection component of this theory that we never have unconstituted objects. Even pre- or extra-human nature is transformed and constituted simply by conceiving it. Transformed subjectivity, we have seen, will change the perception of an object and the theories of classical political economy influenced the development of industry. Nevertheless, by 1844 theory is not a form of praxis in the sense in which it was earlier when Marx spoke of philosophy becoming worldly or criticism transforming the world. To constitute the object, to realize our essence in it, requires labor. Consciousness affects the object in a much less significant way than does labor. In the case of the child or prehumans, since conception would be undeveloped, its transformation of the object would be even less significant, and certainly could not eliminate the need for reflection of the independent object.

It might also be argued that scientific knowledge of pre- or extra-human nature is made possible by working on the object in the sense of performing experiments on it. We must manipulate and transform the object in order to know it.[74] Nevertheless, natural ecology, social and cultural phenomena, domesticated animals, and genetically produced grains are transformed and constituted by industry in a far more significant way than celestial bodies or prehistoric rock formations are transformed by experimental processes or changed sensibilities.

In the *German Ideology*, Marx argues that the aim and material of natural science is transformed and produced by industry.[75] We might argue that both theory and praxis - methods, instruments, even the senses of the knower - would be directly transformed by industry. But the object (celestial bodies, prehistoric rock formations) would only be indirectly transformed and less significantly transformed via transformation of the subject, the subject's instruments, etc. This

would certainly transform the significance that the object would have for us, but it would certainly not transform the object into an unknown thing-in-itself, and the independent object as thing-in-itself would still have to be mirrored in our consciousness.

Thus, we cannot abandon the reflection component and build a theory on constitution alone if we are to explain how we can know nature as yet untransformed by labor and if we are to explain how we are to know things as they are in-themselves. Nor can we abandon the constitution component and develop a simple reflection theory because, despite the fact that reflection without constitution through labor is possible, the object perceived would have little meaning for us.

It is quite clear that objects for children or prehumans would lack significance, at least by the standards of developed subjects. But it would also seem to follow (and Hegel also held such a view) that the knowledge which developed subjects have of untransformed nature would be less significant than knowledge of nature transformed by labor.[76] Significant understanding of nature requires a higher development of the essence which has been objectified in nature[77], of the human senses, scientific methods, and instruments, i.e., in general, a development of theory and praxis as well as of essence and existence. Ordinary scientific knowledge of pre- or extra-human nature is possible, but it is a lower form of knowledge with less human significance because nature's essence in such cases is at a lower stage of realization and because the object has not been humanized through objectification.

CHAPTER TWO

The Method and Epistemology of Marx'

Materialist View of the World (1845-1856)

In studying the method and epistemology of Marx' "materialist view of the world" (or his historical materialism, as Engels later called it), some scholars who hold that there is an essential unity to Marx' thought take the *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845) as the focal point of their inquiry.

If, however, there is a shift in Marx' thought between 1844 and 1845-6, as I think there is, then the *Theses* cannot be taken as a focal text. Instead we must study the *1844 Manuscripts* and the *German Ideology* (1845-6), sort out differences and continuities, and only then might one see where along the spectrum of this shift the transitional and obscure *Theses* lie.

Other scholars who disagree with the essential unity view and who admit the existence of a shift, as I do, wish further to hold that the foundation of Marx' mature method is laid in the *German Ideology*. I do not find this justifiable either.

I. ABANDONMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF ESSENCE

In the *German Ideology* Marx admits that his thought has undergone a change. He does, however, downplay the magnitude of this change. He claims that in his earlier 'Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law' and in 'On the Jewish Question' (both of 1843) his "materialist view of the world" had already been emerging but that its elaboration had been flawed by "philosophical phraseology" - he had employed "philosophical expressions such as 'human essence' ".[1]

The change, however, is clearly more than one in "phraseology". In the *German Ideology* Marx abandons the metaphysical concept of essence which had been central to his thought up to 1845. In criticizing Feuerbach for holding a doctrine of double perception, Marx now rejects his own earlier position as much as that of Feuerbach. Marx no longer accepts a doctrine which accounts for reality at two ontological levels, one level, "a profane one which perceives only the flatly obvious", and a second level, "a higher, philosophical, one which perceives the 'true essence' of things".[2]

In 1844 Marx understood the difference between humans and

animals as a difference in essence. The ability of humans to make their life activity the object of their will and consciousness was the manifestation of their species essence. In the *German Ideology* Marx does not change his mind about the characteristics which distinguish humans from animals, but he does cease to explain them as the result of an essence. He argues that humans can obviously be distinguished from animals by consciousness or religion, but that what is of greater importance is that humans "themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence".[3] In other words, significant difference between humans and animals is due to specific forms of socio-economic activity, not to any sort of metaphysical essence.[4]

Marx now holds that "the sum of productive forces, capital funds and social forms of intercourse, which every individual and every generation finds in existence as something given, is the real basis of what philosophers have conceived as 'substance' and the 'essence of man' ". Socio-economic conditions are real; metaphysical notions of substance and essence are illusions, phantoms, of the philosophers.[5]

Marx rejects the reality of metaphysical essences, but nevertheless attempts to account for the fact that they appeared real to past thinkers. All ideas, real or illusory, including ideas of human nature, are expressions of socio-economic relations and activities.[6]

In the sixth of the *Theses on Feuerbach* Marx holds, according to Fromm's interpretation, that Feuerbach's concept of essence should be replaced by a concept which takes the "ensemble of social relations" as constituting the "real essence" of human beings - in other words, rather than rejecting essences, Marx is holding that social relations are the real essences.[7] While this may well be the position of the transitional *Theses*, we must not allow this to obscure the sharp difference between the *1844 Manuscripts* and the *German Ideology*. In the former, material conditions (e.g., private property) are caused by and explained as the realization of a human essence. In the *German Ideology* it is quite the reverse. What it means to be human is determined not by an essence but by material conditions. What it means to be human is determined by the "definite relations predominant at a certain stage of production and to the way of satisfying needs determined by them". [8]

II. HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AND METHOD

If, as Marx now says, Communism is not a "searching for 'essence' ", not "an ideal to which reality will have to adjust", but a real movement

in history, then a new method is necessary. The task of this section will be to understand Marx' historical materialism and its method. The method of the *1844 Manuscripts* required that private property and indeed all the categories of political economy be explained as actualizations of an essence - the human essence (in this case the human essence as estranged).[9] Marx not only ceases to demand that appearance be explained as the realization of an essence, but he also reverses the order in which phenomena are understood to develop. In the *German Ideology* he argues that the historical development of production and division of labor give rise to specific forms of property and only then is estrangement produced.[10] Estrangement is not the essence or origin, but rather the result, of private property.

The new method is the method of "positive science"[11]; it resolves all philosophical problems into matters of empirical fact. It rejects all speculation, denies that there are different levels of essence and appearance, and operates only at the level of empirical observation. It begins by studying the material process of production; it then comprehends the form of intercourse connected with and created by the specific mode of production; and then explains the development of ideas from this material basis. It does not begin with ideas in order to explain material conditions (this would now be considered a metaphysical method). Consciousness is understood as consciousness of actual life processes. Ideas are determined and altered as material production and the actual world are altered. This process is empirically verifiable and the method must treat it as such.[12]

To understand this method we must begin to understand Marx' doctrine of historical materialism, what claims it is making, and how we must interpret them. For Marx, the forces of production and the relations of production (or forms of intercourse) mutually determine each other. It is human interaction which creates and reproduces existing relations. "Circumstances make men just as much as men make circumstances."[13] However, this occurs independently of the will of individuals. There is no historical development without the action and participation of individuals, but this development is not consciously determined by them. "The material life of individuals, which by no means depends merely on their 'will', their mode of production and form of intercourse, which mutually determine each other - this is the real basis of the state and remains so at all stages at which private property and division of labour are still necesary, quite independently of the will of the individuals."[14]

But our primary concern in studying Marx' doctrine of historical materialism is to understand his claims concerning the relationship of

ideas to material conditions. For Marx, while forces and relations of production, i.e., material conditions, mutually determine each other, material conditions and ideas do not. "It is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness."[15]

However, there are many scholars who argue that ideas and material conditions do mutually determine each other. They frequently cite the third of the *Theses on Feuerbach* where Marx criticizes the doctrine of traditional materialists who, while accepting that circumstances and education determine human beings, are unable to explain how circumstances and education themselves are transformed. This doctrine "forgets that it is men who change circumstances and that the educator must himself be educated".[16] Does this imply that ideas and material conditions mutually determine each other? Perhaps it does, especially if read from the perspective of the *1844 Manuscripts*. But this is not the view of the *German Ideology*, where it is argued that material conditions determine praxis and that the praxis arising from such conditions transforms those conditions. In other words, to separate himself from traditional materialism Marx does not argue that ideas and material conditions mutually determine each other. To read the *Theses on Feuerbach* from the perspective of the *German Ideology* would be to hold that traditional materialists failed to understand how material conditions are transformed (thus educating the educator), not independently by ideas, but by the praxis which grows out of, interacts with, and changes existing conditions. This is clearly Marx' position in the *German Ideology*. The *Theses on Feuerbach* are not perfectly clear but are probably closer to the views of the *1844 Manuscripts*.

In his discussion of historical materialism in the *German Ideology*, I shall argue in what follows, Marx' position is that before the realization of Communist society material conditions always determine ideas, though sometimes they do so indirectly. Ideas and material conditions do not mutually and equally determine each other. Consciousness is no longer taken to be a form of praxis as it was in 1844. Of course, praxis requires and involves consciousness as do material conditions (the productive forces and relations), and consciousness or ideas are realized through praxis.[17] But the role of ideas is extremely limited. Whatever effect they have, they have only as determined by praxis and material conditions. Consciousness does not determine praxis nor the transformation of material conditions. Consciousness is determined by material conditions and the praxis that grows out of those conditions. Historical materialism, Marx says,

> does not explain practice from the idea but explains the formation of

> ideas from material practice, and accordingly it comes to the conclusion that all forms and products of consciousness cannot be dissolved by mental criticism . . . but only by the practical overthrow of the actual social relations which gave rise to this idealistic humbug; that not criticism but revolution is the driving force of history, also of religion, of philosophy and of all other kinds of theory. [18]

Further, Marx says that historians have

> only been able to see in history the spectacular political events and religious and other theoretical struggles, and in particular with regard to each historical epoch they were compelled to share the illusion of that epoch. For instance, if an epoch imagines itself to be actuated by purely "political" or "religious" motives, although "religion" and "politics" are only forms of its true motives, the historian accepts this opinion. The "fancy", the "conception" of the people in question about their real practice is transformed into the sole determining and effective force, which dominates and determines their practice . . . while really it is only a question of explaining these theoretical phrases from the actual existing relations. The real, practical dissolution of these phrases, the removal of these notions from the consciousness of men, will, as we have already said, be effected by altered circumstances, not by theoretical deductions.[19]

With regard to ideas, then, historical materialism, I will argue, makes three claims relevant to our concerns. Before the development of Communist society, (1) it is an ideological illusion to think that ideas can independently transform material conditions. Ideas are only the expression of material conditions. Our ideas and even our will are determined by material conditions.[20] For example, Marx says that material conditions form a real basis which is not in the least disturbed, in its effect and influence on the development of human beings, by the critical activity of philosophers.[21] (2) Consciousness cannot even come into contradiction with material conditions unless material conditions themselves embody that contradiction.[22] (3) Consciousness cannot even alter itself independently; its alteration will be determined by material conditions. The illusion that it can be altered independently is itself a product of material conditions. Changes in consciousness are "effected by altered circumstances, not by theoretical deductions".[23] Let us explore these claims.

Much of the disagreement concerning the relationship of ideas to material conditions stems from comments made by Engels. In letters written during the 1890s Engels argues that ideas, political and philosophical theories, and religious views may well preponderate in determining historical development, while economic conditions are merely the ultimate or decisive element determining such development. Engels also claims that it would be pedantic to seek economic causes for all religious and philosophical conceptions. Economic factors, for Engels, create nothing new in this realm. They simply determine the way in which existing thought material is altered.[24]

Engels is careful not to present these views as a description of Marx' earlier position. In fact, Engels claims that he and Marx had over-emphasized the economic element in reaction to their opponents.[25] Engels' position differs in subtle but significant ways from the view that Marx held in the *German Ideology*, and, I will argue, the method of the *German Ideology* cannot be understood simply as having over-emphasized certain elements of a method which Marx continues to employ in the later writings.

In the *German Ideology* Marx argues that in early stages of history ideas are "directly interwoven with the material activity and material intercourse of men". Ideas are "the direct efflux of . . . material behavior". "The phantoms formed in the brains of men are also, necessarily, sublimates of their material life processes."[26]

Later in history, after a division between mental and physical labor has emerged, ideas may appear independent, but in fact determinism is greater in later than in earlier history.[27] Ideas and material conditions are not mutually determining. Marx is explicit: when ideas "come into contradiction with existing relations, this can *only occur because existing social relations have come into contradiction with existing productive forces*". Even when ideas seem to be independent they are in fact determined by the interaction between forces and relations of production.[28]

Even in Marx' discussion of the Communist Party, where we might expect ideas and theory to play a more predominant role, we find that this is not the case. In Section II of the *Communist Manifesto* Marx describes the Party as an organization which merely studies actual historical movement and communicates its understanding to other sectors of the working class. It does not oppose itself to other parties and it has no principles or interests of its own by which it tries to shape or mold the movement.[29]

Nor does consciousness play a determining role in revolution or class struggle. Instead, a contradiction between forces and relations of

production arises and crises occur. This produces a polarization of classes and the pauperization of the proletariat. The proletariat is then thrust toward revolution. Only out of revolutionary praxis and class struggle does a Communist consciousness arise.[30]

However, this view that material conditions determine ideas raises certain difficulties. Rotenstreich argues that this doctrine is incompatible with Marx' very scientific endeavor - that independent research and analysis are not possible if ideas are determined by material conditions.[31] This is a complex issue. We must begin to understand more precisely in what way and to what extent ideas are determined by material conditions. In the first place the determination of ideas by material conditions is not to be understood as it was for traditional materialism. Consciousness is not a form of matter for Marx and the physical laws of matter are not the laws of consciousness. Nor is there a direct causal relation between material states and consciousness.[32] Ideas are distinct, significant, and necessary factors that interact with the material conditions.[33] Without this interaction there would be no historical development and no human reality. Marx makes it quite clear that ideas are not to be discounted or reduced to material conditions.[34] It is just that material conditions determine ideas.

Nor is this determinism to be taken as metaphysical - it is not part of the eternal nature of things. Rather, it is sociological. It is the case that hitherto in history ideas have been determined by social conditions, but with the emergence of Communist society the reverse will be the case; individuals will consciously and collectively regulate their intercourse according to a general plan.[35]

In trying to explain Marx' views on this matter, one of the things that we must eventually do is to decide exactly what it means to say that material conditions determine ideas. It is clear how the ideas of others can influence our ideas. If the ideas of others are powerful enough, we might say they determine our ideas. But how do material conditions determine ideas, and how strictly do they determine them?

If it is possible for ideas to predominate in determining material conditions in the future, we must ask whether it is possible in the present for ideas to have some independence, if not in a widespread way, at least in certain instances. Marx says that for ideas to contradict material conditions it is necessary that contradiction exist between the forces and relations of production. This does not deny some independence (short of contradiction or determination) to ideas within the parameters of existing material conditions.[36] The question is how much independence?

Marx admits that ideas are not always determined directly and

exclusively by material conditions - they can be influenced by other ideas, especially ruling ideas. The ideas of the ruling class of any epoch are "the ideal expression of the dominant relations . . . grasped as ideas", but they are grasped from the perspective and influenced by the interests of the ruling class. Moreover, these ideas can be "elaborated and given special significance" by ideologists.[37] Ideas can thus be influenced by other ideas and therefore the determination of ideas by material conditions can be indirect, i.e., mediated by other ideas. However, unless this is to contradict Marx' claim that the alteration of ideas is itself the product of material conditions, we must take care to remember that the effect that ruling ideas have on other ideas is determined by material conditions and that the degree to which ideas can be elaborated would be set by the parameters established by material conditions.

There might seem to be a contradiction here. Marx claims that in early history ideas were a "direct efflux of", "sublimates of", material life processes, while in later history ideas can be elaborated and can influence other ideas.[38] This seems to imply a looser sort of determinism of ideas by material conditions in later than in earlier history. But in fact Marx explicitly holds the opposite - that determinism is greater in later history. How do we make sense of this? If we distinguish between the origin of ideas and their continued development, we can see that in the discussion of early history Marx for the most part was considering the origin of ideas, the conditions under which ideas are first produced by human beings. There, they were a direct efflux of material conditions. Then he adds to this that later in history ideas can also be produced through the influence of other ideas and through the elaboration of existing ideas. Presumably the production of new ideas becomes easier as ideas and social conditions become richer and more complex.[39] Nevertheless, despite the fact that we do independently produce our own ideas, this independence is quite limited since ideas cannot independently contradict material conditions and, while they can be influenced by other ideas, this can occur only within the bounds determined by material conditions.

Then Marx also discusses how ideas, after they have been produced, continue to develop, spread, and influence society in an ongoing way as patterns of thought, worldviews, or ideologies. They are also determined by material conditions so that they cannot contradict such conditions unless there already exists a contradiction between the forces and relations of production. It is this aspect of determinism, I suggest, that is held to be stronger and more thorough-going in later history.[40] By implication then, in earlier history this aspect of

determinism was not as strong, presumably because the forces and relations of production were insufficiently developed.[41]

I cannot say that I am persuaded by this very strict doctrine of the determination of ideas by material conditions, but it seems to me that this is Marx' position in the *German Ideology*.[42]

However, when Marx summarized his doctrine in the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy* (1859), he seems to have changed it in part. He says: "it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic, or philosophic - in short, ideological - forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out."[43] By implication the ideological forms cannot be determined or traced with the precision of natural science.

What is clear in both the *German Ideology* and the Preface is that, contrary to Engels, ideas do not (before Communism) independently determine material conditions. Yet ideas can be elaborated and can influence other ideas within the parameters determined by material conditions.

To what extent science is compatible with this conception of the relation of ideas to material conditions depends in part upon whether science is expected to predict or just to study and understand phenomena. In either case, however, the accuracy of science would depend upon the degree to which it is able empirically to grasp a determined process. Prediction as well as systematic understanding would be impossible if the phenomena themselves were not to some extent regular, consistent, and determined.

The Preface suggests that it is not possible to predict ideas. Scientific precision is not claimed in this area. In the *German Ideology* Marx speaks only of explaining ideas and tracing them from material conditions.[44] It would be most difficult to predict ideas with precision if ideas can be elaborated and can influence other ideas. All that we could be sure of would be that any ideas which exist would fall within the parameters determined by material conditions.

Would it be possible, however, to predict social transformation? The Preface suggests that there is a strict determinism present in this realm and that it can be grasped with scientific precision. There are those, however, who claim that Marx' science is not intended to predict.[45] In one place Marx does mention a certain sociologist who was able to predict with astonishing accuracy the amount of crime that would occur in France in a given year.[46] But nowhere does Marx explicitly claim that prediction is the aim of his method. Even when

discussing the function of the Communist Party, Marx speaks only in terms of the study and understanding of actual social movements. When discussing social transformation he only discusses necessary, not sufficient, conditions for such transformation. The point, I think, is to understand social reality adequately enough so that praxis can effectively and strategically work toward the achievement of aims allowed by that reality, not to predict inevitable results.[47]

With regard to analysis and study, the implication of the Preface is that the development of ideas from material conditions cannot be explained or traced with scientific accuracy, whereas the view of the *German Ideology* was that they could be.

On the other hand, the view of both the Preface and the *German Ideology* is that social transformation can be accurately understood. Moreover, in the Preface ideas do not seem to be so strictly determined that independent analysis would be impossible.[48] But in the *German Ideology*, it is not at all clear whether independent analysis is possible. If ideas are sufficiently determined by material conditions to permit science to trace the development of ideas from these conditions, can independent analysis be possible? If the analysis that Marx himself carries out is possible, can ideas be determined enough to be traced?

Given this problem, there is, I suggest, an important consequence for Marx' method. There is a tendency in the *German Ideology* to try to eliminate the need for independent analysis. In the first place, Marx tries to deny that abstractions or categories play any very important role in the scientific process.[49]

In the *1844 Manuscripts* Marx criticized classical political economy for studying the actual movement of society and thus failing to deduce appearance from an essence.[50] In the *German Ideology*, Marx rejects the approach of deducing appearance from an essence. He holds that the proper method remains entirely at the empirical level. It not only rejects the appeal to essences, but even attacks the use of abstractions and categories. Empirical study, a straightforward looking-at[51], which presupposes or requires no independent abstractions, categories, or theoretical structure is all that science is about.

Abstractions appear at the end of the study. In so far as they are employed along the way, they do not figure significantly in the process. Abstractions sum up general results, indicate sequence, and facilitate arrangement of material. Beyond this they have no value. Marx says that positive science is concerned only with

> a summing-up of the most general results, abstractions which are derived from the observation of the historical development of men.

> These abstractions in themselves, divorced from real history, have no value whatsoever. They can only serve to facilitate the arrangement of historical material, to indicate the sequence of separate strata. But they by no means afford a recipe or schema, as does philosophy, for neatly trimming the epochs of history.

The method starts from empirical observation of material conditions, comprehends intercourse, and explains ideas, abstractions, and categories as crystallizations or summaries. It does not use the latter to explain the former.[52]

Abstractions and categories seem to be generated by empirical study in much the same way as ideas are generated by historical development in general, i.e., as ultimate results rather than as factors which independently affect the development. Marx, for example, argues that there is no independent history of ideas. This means that historical connections are not, and are not explainable as, connections between ideas. To be explained, ideas, even if mediated by other ideas, must be explained from material conditions. History, then, must be the history of material conditions. In another passage Marx adds that neither is there a history of science. In other words, science and scientific concepts are no more independent of material conditions than any other ideas are.[53]

Categories, Marx argues, are derived from empirical observation of historical development. They are abstractions from socio-historical relations of production. Marx explicitly rejects the notion that, having abstracted categories from their specific socio-historical context, one can or should seek to discover or produce any order, connection, or set of relations between the categories themselves either in a specific social epoch or across different historical epochs. Categories provide no "schema for ordering historical development".[54] If one does an empirical study of a period (its productive forces, mode of production, social relations, needs, etc.), then it is unnecessary to seek to establish a connection between abstract categories.[55] In this sense the role of independent analysis in science is minimal.

How, then, we must finally decide, do material conditions determine ideas? We have seen that the original production of ideas in later history can occur with some slight independence from material conditions. We do produce our own ideas. Thus, we might want to explain the determination of ideas by material conditions as follows. We might want to say that individuals in the modern world are relatively free to think up and discover new significant ideas, but simply that the effect that these ideas would have on society, the degree to which they

would be received, the importance they are likely to be accorded, and the degree to which others would pick them up would be determined by material conditions. We might even want to say, for example, that new discoveries in very abstract fields like pure mathematics at least could arise without being much affected by material conditions. They could be produced more or less exclusively by the mathematician's reflection (conditioned, of course, by the given level of mathematics and science but not necessarily by material conditions - material conditions like economic support or industrial and technological needs could be influences, but the point is that they need not be - ideas could arise independently).

However, in the *German Ideology* Marx does not hold this view. He insists that science arises out of the empirical study of existing material conditions and he even wants to deny that ideas which scientists might independently think up play any role in their scientific method. Moreover, the more independence one allows to the development of new ideas, the more difficult it becomes to hold that they can be traced from material conditions (on the other hand, it seems rather farfetched to hold that the development of new ideas in pure mathematics could in fact be traced from material conditions). Thus, Marx does not avail himself of the notion of relative independence in the production of ideas to navigate between the Scylla and Charybdis of determinism versus independent analysis. One begins to suspect, then, that this slight independence in the production of new ideas is a phenomenon to be found in ideology, not in accurate science. Whatever independence is possible in the production of ideas is not very significant.

On the other hand, the effect that ideas, even those found in pure mathematics, might have, e.g., their influence in industry, technology, and other sciences and thus their significance in these realms would be determined by material conditions. We might want to argue that once ideas have been developed and incorporated into institutionalized material forms - books, the media, educational institutions, religions, etc. - these ideas could come to have an increasingly independent effect due to the power of these institutions. However, Marx would hold that the effect these ideas could have on people, the degree to which they would influence them, be accepted, and spread would be determined by material conditions. Even the effect that powerful ruling ideas have, they have only because they are reinforced by material conditions, and even revolutionary ideas would have effect only to the extent that a social movement generated by material conditions reinforced those ideas and allowed them to appear significant.[56]

To what extent this process could be traced would depend upon how completely it was determined by material conditions. Marx, we have seen, changes his views on this matter. Other sciences, those for example which must rely on experimentation, would be much more dependent upon material conditions even for the production of new ideas. The availability of equipment necessary to perform an experiment would depend upon the existing technological capacity of industry and accessibility to these capacities. Until it is possible to produce cyclotrons, computers, and large telescopes, the experiments and thus discoveries dependent upon this technology would remain impossible. So also, for social sciences, which depend upon the investigation and analysis of social conditions, the rise of new ideas would be determined by the degree to which specific social conditions have emerged, crystallized, and become evident. Perhaps by reflecting upon these sorts of sciences rather than those like pure mathematics, Marx was led in the *German Ideology* to think that scientific method could proceed without independent reflection and that the world and our experience could be accounted for without such reflection.

Later, in the *Grundrisse*, Marx will reject this rather implausible view. He will not only allow greater room for independent reflection and the production of new ideas in science, but in fact his method will necessarily presuppose it.

In the *Grundrisse* (1857-8), Marx decides that it is possible and indeed the correct method first to understand in the abstract the complex set of relations that hold between the categories of modern capitalist economy. This is necessary before one can understand either the actual empirical conditions of that economy or its historical development.

To navigate between this Scylla and Charybdis (if ideas are determined enough to be traced, independent analysis may be impossible, whereas if independent analysis is possible, ideas may not be determined enough to be traced), Marx in the *German Ideology* tries to eliminate the need for independent analysis. In the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, after having developed a new method in the *Grundrisse*, Marx, I suggest, takes the opposite approach. He downplays the degree to which ideas are determined and can be traced.[57]

Capital could not have been written in the form that it was if Marx had kept to the method of the *German Ideology*. *Capital*, following the method introduced in the *Grundrisse*, begins with an analysis of abstract categories (value, exchange value, and commodity) in order to understand the key abstraction, surplus value.[58] It analyzes these categories, tries to separate their general from their specific capitalist

form, and works out in an abstract model the totality of their relations in modern capitalist society. Only in the third volume of *Capital* do we emerge from the abstract realm of value to the realm of appearance - the concrete, empirical, observable world of prices. The theory of price is grounded on the theory of value. Value is the center of gravity around which prices fluctuate.[59] An understanding of the empirical and concrete is dependent upon, and only becomes possible with, an abstract theory of categories and their relations.[60]

In *Wage-Labour and Capital* (1849), written shortly after the *German Ideology*, we find a treatment of political economy which follows the earlier method. Here prices are not clearly, if at all, distinguished from exchange value, and both are determined by empirical market forces - competition and supply and demand.[61] In *Capital* the price of a commodity is the cost-price plus the addition of the average rate of profit, both determined in circulation by empirical market forces. Value, however, is determined not by market forces but in production, and value appears as an abstract metaphysical thing.[62] In *Wage-Labour and Capital*, Marx had not yet developed his theory of value and surplus value. He could thus more easily adopt an approach which denied the importance of abstract categories for empirical observation. On the other hand, *Capital*'s abstract theory of value and surplus value, key to the theory of prices, would be impossible on this earlier method. For the method of the *Grundrisse* and for the actual procedure of *Capital* abstractions are key to the whole theory.

The method of the *German Ideology* not only rejects the identification of categories and abstractions with metaphysical essences (the method of the *1844 Manuscripts*), but it rejects almost altogether the value of abstractions and categories themselves.

Many who in opposition to the theory of essential unity in Marx' thought admit to a break between 1844 and 1845-6 also argue that the foundation of Marx' mature method is laid in the *German Ideology*. Instead, this text would better be read as an over-reaction to the doctrine of the *1844 Manuscripts*, much of which had to be rejected later.

III. HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Marx' materialist view of the world includes an epistemology which we must try to understand in this section. It begins with a theory of the social origin of consciousness. Despite considerable ambiguity, Marx is not, I think, trying to explain the origin of consciousness from a non-conscious state or even from a purely animal consciousness. The

starting point, the first premise, is the existence of humans, and from the start there is a difference between human and animal consciousness. Humans are more conscious than instinctual; they are even capable of natural religion. Humans have the capacity to develop self-consciousness while animals do not. An animal's relation to an object does not exist as a relation for the animal; the animal does not "relate itself" to anything. Marx only attempts to explain how consciousness develops from something already beyond (though barely beyond) animal consciousness to a developed consciousness of relations, i.e., to self-consciousness.[63]

This reading is reinforced by things Marx says elsewhere in the *German Ideology*. Marx distinguishes between basic needs and desires common to all social formations which change only their form and direction given changed social relations, and needs and desires which originate only in certain forms of society and may even be eliminated by changed social relations.[64] Marx also holds that the talents and potentialities of particular individuals naturally differ and that social conditions only determine whether or not and to what extent the given potentiality will be realized. Marx' position is not that social conditions bring human consciousness, basic needs, and talents into existence from non-existence. They exist on their own as natural phenomena. Social conditions determine only how they are channelled, transformed, and given specific content.[65] Marx' position in the *German Ideology* is not a monism in which labor alone transforms the animal into a human being.[66] Human history is not a radical self-creation through labor as it was in the *1844 Manuscripts*.[67]

Human consciousness from the start forms a natural basis for possible modification and development. The modification is what is to be explained. However, since human beings never actually exist apart from society and production, so neither does human consciousness. Human existence always involves social relations if only as simple as the family. Thus the production of life and the satisfaction of needs involve relations which at once are both natural and social. Consciousness, through language, develops from the need of intercourse with others. Humans must transform nature to satisfy need. The satisfaction of needs will lead to the creation of new needs. When needs, production, and nature have as yet barely been altered from their original condition by historical development, human consciousness differs little from animal consciousness. Human beings are aware of the immediate sensuous environment and of limited connections to other persons. They are simply conditioned by geological, oro- hydrographical, and climatic factors. They are overawed by nature as an

alien, unassailable force and natural religion arises.[68]

Consciousness develops with increased production, new needs, increased population, more complex intercourse, and division of labor. With the emergence of a division between mental and physical labor, abstract theory, philosophy, and morality arise. The extent and scope to which individual needs, capacities, and consciousness develop is determined by the universality and scope of production and social intercourse.[69]

What human beings are depends upon their production - upon what and how they produce. Even what human beings perceive depends upon these conditions. Both the subject and the object are transformed historically. The sensuous world is not an unchanging given. The simplest objects of perception are products of industry and intercourse. Fruit trees, Marx points out, were transplanted into western Europe by commerce. Landscapes and the natural environment are transformed by industry. Our needs and desires are transformed historically. "Natural science is provided with its aim, as with its material, only through trade and industry." Human beings confront a historically transformed nature. The relation of human beings to nature has been established through production and industry so that nature and human beings cannot be separated. The given sensuous world is the "total living sensuous activity of the individuals composing it".[70]

Thus there are two moments to Marx' doctrine of nature. First, the relation of human beings to nature (including perception and knowledge) is determined by the historical transformation of the subject and of the object through industry and intercourse. Second, this historical transformation presupposes as a natural basis a starting point where the human being's relation to nature was such that needs, consciousness, and nature had not yet been transformed socially.[71]

There are three possible relationships between these two moments that might plausibly be put forth as Marx' position on the matter: (1) that the original natural basis is a lower level of reality which through social transformation manifests itself (for-us and in-itself) as a higher level of reality and truth (this comes close to the doctrine of the *1844 Manuscripts* and, I will argue, is incompatible with the doctrine of the *German Ideology*); (2) that the original natural basis is fundamental and real in-itself but that its historical modification, a socially mediated construction, is the only reality for-us (this is the subjectivist interpretation of Lukács, Schmidt, and Jordan[72]); or (3) that there are no levels of reality and no split between an in-itself and a for-us at all, that the original natural basis and all stages of its transformation have the same ontological status. This last, I will argue, is Marx' position in

the *German Ideology*. To establish this will require adequate evidence against three interconnected claims which would otherwise lead to the subjectivist interpretation; we must prove incorrect the common claims that (1) knowledge about prehuman nature is impossible, (2) that perception involves a constitution rather than a reflection of the object, and (3) that Marx accepts an unknown thing-in-itself.

It is rather easy to fall into accepting the subjectivist interpretation. We do find statements which, if not perfectly clear, at least seem to suggest subjectivism. Marx says that Communism "treats all naturally evolved premises as the creation of hitherto existing men . . . the reality which communism creates is precisely the true basis for rendering it impossible that anything should exist independently of individuals, insofar as reality is nevertheless only a product of the preceding intercourse of individuals".[73] This passage makes it clear that historical transformation is the necessary basis of all reality and knowledge, but does it imply that this reality is to be taken as a mere for-us?

In the *1844 Manuscripts* Marx held that existence or appearance was historically transformed by industry. But he also held that through this process of transformation essence was actualized in existence. One of the results of this was that perception could be objective. Perception could grasp the true essential realization of the thing-in-itself in appearance.[74] Having abandoned this conception of essence but still holding that existence is transformed by human industry, perception and knowledge might seem to become subjective perception of a socially constructed reality for-us rather than of an objective reality in-itself.

In arguing against the subjectivist interpretation we must begin by noticing that Marx' discussion of the relation of thought to reality is incompatible with the notion of an unknown thing-in-itself. We have seen that in the early writings Marx clearly rejected such a concept. Nowhere in the *German Ideology* does Marx suggest that he has changed his mind about this and nowhere do we find a suggestion that he accepts an unknown thing-in-itself. While we do not find in the *German Ideology* as clear a rejection of this concept as in the early writings, we do find Marx criticizing Max Stirner's claim "that the ego receives an 'impulse' (in Fichte's sense) from the world". This impulse, of course, is Fichte's transformed version of Kant's thing-in-itself, and Hegel argued that it remained for Fichte an unknown thing-in-itself.[75] In a passage which was crossed out in the final draft of the *German Ideology,* but the substance of which is repeated elsewhere, Marx goes on to say that the "communists intend to gain control over this impulse".[76] By this Marx does not mean to imply that

he accepts Fichte's distinction between an ego and an unknown thing-in-itself or impulse. He does not accept it. In another passage he explicitly rejects the Fichtean distinction between a subjective constitution of the world by the individual and an objective impulse which the individual receives from the world.[77] He calls this a trashy distinction. What Marx means is that the Communists will come to know and control this supposedly unknown thing-in-itself or impulse.

Furthermore, we also find in the *German Ideology* a theory of language which implies that the notion of a thing-in-itself always remaining beyond our knowledge or control is merely a philosophical illusion.

Concerning the relation of material reality, language, and thought, Marx argues that both language and thought are determined by material conditions. For Marx language is the product of real life in society. Actual social relations are the basis of relations and meaning in language.[78]

This relation between material conditions and language, however, comes to appear reversed. Since language expresses relations in concepts and concepts can be elaborated by ideologists, ideologists end up taking concepts and language rather than real relations to be the true basis of things. Even this inversion, however, is determined by material conditions, especially the division of labor. Given this inversion, the problem of knowledge, of the relation of thought to reality, is taken by philosophers to be a problem of linking language to being, language to its object, in the sense of seeking a word which "points from within language to the actual object it denotes". This is entirely an illusion which stems from taking language and thought to be an independent realm of reality and the true basis of things. To understand language as well as reality correctly "philosophers have only to dissolve their language into the ordinary language from which it is abstracted, in order to recognize it as the distorted language of the actual world, and to realize that neither thoughts nor language in themselves form a realm of their own, that they are only manifestations of actual life".[79]

Several important points can now be made which will show that Marx rejects an unknown thing-in-itself. First, from the last quotation we can see that Hook is correct when he points out that Marx does not take knowledge to be immediate awareness of subjective perceptions such that a knowledge of the external thing-in-itself would inevitably be lost as for the empiricist tradition. Ideas and language do not "form a realm of their own" apart from or closed off from the external world. We are not trapped within our ideas or language trying to peer through

to understand the external world. Instead, we only correctly understand our language and ideas when we understand the actual world. Marx' empirical method seeks knowledge of actual reality, "actual life". This can be gained only through a process which requires observation and verification.[80]

Moreover, when Marx says that ideas are not an "independent realm of reality", he is obviously rejecting the idealist position which either denies the existence of an external world apart from ideas or takes ideas to be the essence of that reality. At the same time, though not so obvious, Marx is rejecting the position of traditional materialism which holds either that all reality including ideas is material or that ideas are an epiphenomenal reality tied to material motions. Despite the fact that he holds that ideas are not "an independent realm of reality", he is not holding the traditional materialist position nor is he in any way subordinating ideas as a lower sort of reality to material conditions.

We have discussed Marx' naturalism. The main difference between a naturalist and a traditional materialist is that the former does not accept the metaphysical claim that all reality is material. Instead, naturalism holds as a methodological doctrine that all phenomena are natural and can be studied by using the scientific method. Naturalism does not attempt to reduce human or social phenomena (including ideas) to matter and motion. Thus for a naturalist to deny that ideas are an independent realm of reality is simply to assert that they belong to the realm of the natural along with material conditions and all else. To argue that material conditions determine ideas is not to reduce the latter to the former, or to imply that the latter are somehow less real. It is simply to assert a relationship between different natural phenomena.[81]

Marx' position on these issues is clearest in his criticism of Stirner's doctrine of psychological fixation. Marx admits the possibility of psychological fixation, i.e., that fixed ideas or desires can have a causal effect on our behaviour and development. But he denies that ideas or psychic phenomena alone are responsible for this. He argues that material conditions determine whether or not ideas and desires become fixated (as well as whether or not they remain fixated).[82] Ideas are determined by material conditions, but ideas themselves are not being reduced to these conditions. Ideas themselves have effect. The same position can also be seen in the doctrine of ruling ideas and in the claim that under Communism ideas will predominate in determining material conditions.

Thus, for Marx, there is no ontological difference of levels. There is one reality - empirical existence. Concepts and language are simply a part of this reality. Moreover, we saw earlier that Marx also rejected

Feuerbach's view that there are two ontological levels to reality, essence and appearance.[83] There is no essence or thing-in-itself outside of or behind empirical appearance to be grasped by concepts or pointed to by language, nor is there a conceptual realm which can be taken to be an independent realm of reality - a for-us cut off from empirical existence in-itself.

The evidence that Marx does not accept an unknown thing-in-itself in the *German Ideology* is in large part inferential; but, in the absence of any evidence that Marx revised his earlier rejection of this notion, it seems reasonable to conclude that this is his actual view.

The rejection of an unknown thing-in-itself as a philosophical illusion is further reinforced by Marx' changed doctrine that perception reflects rather than constitutes the object. It is frequently argued that for Marx the object of perception is constituted.[84] In the *1844 Manuscripts* the subject contributed to the constitution of the object in two ways, by actually transforming the object through praxis but also in perceiving it. The subject was active in both senses (the object of course reacted upon the subject, gave rise to new needs, and transformed both the senses and the praxis of the subject). In the *German Ideology* the subject is active in the first sense[85] but passive in the second. An individual's praxis does transform the object (which then transforms the individual's needs and further praxis), and it is also true that the dialectical development between the object and praxis transforms consciousness. But there is nothing in the *German Ideology* to suggest that consciousness or perception themselves play an active and independent role in transforming or constituting the object. The notion that thought transforms its object will be denied (for theoretical knowledge) in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*.[86] But already in the *German Ideology* Marx argues that the object is not in the least disturbed in its effect and influence on the development of human beings by the critical activity of philosophers. He denies that consciousness, or changes in consciousness, independently change the objective world. He even denies that consciousness can contradict material conditions unless a contradiction exists within material conditions themselves.[87] Transformation and constitution of the object occur only through praxis.[88]

By 'object' one might mean several different things: (1) an external real entity distinct from consciousness, (2) an image or percept within consciousness as for the empiricist tradition, or (3) a synthetic construction which is neither exclusively subjective nor exclusively external but rather constituted by a synthesis of these two factors. Here, changes in consciousness could change the object. In the *1844*

Manuscripts Marx' concept of an object was closest to this third sense.[89] In the *German Ideology* he clearly holds to the first sense, though of course this object can be transformed through praxis.[90]

Marx does admit that consciousness undergoes development. If the object is understood not in the third but in the first sense, then the development of knowledge, since it would not imply a change in the object, would only mean that a more detailed and complete grasp or reflection of the object had been achieved.[91]

However, the *Theses on Feuerbach* tell us that truth is established through praxis, i.e., that truth is not grasped immediately but is discovered through a process of working on, experimenting with, or transforming the object. Does this mean that praxis constitutes the object? It is clearly Marx' view that through history industrial praxis transforms and constitutes the object, but does scientific praxis? If we understand the *Theses*, as Schmidt does, to mean that the experimental processes of natural science transform and constitute their object in studying it, then serious problems arise.[92] Knowledge of an object transformed by scientific experiment would not be knowledge of the original untransformed object. Knowledge of that part of the history of nature which preceded human history would thus be completely impossible.

For early human beings, before transformation of nature and consciousness by industry, awareness barely went beyond animal consciousness. This was not knowledge. Animal consciousness of unmodified objects having long ago disappeared, the knowledge which modern natural science (if it necessarily transforms its object) might give us of prehuman untransformed objects becomes highly problematic.[93] Especially so since Marx rejects the value of abstractions and specifically rejects the possibility that they give us any knowledge that goes beyond empirical study.[94]

Leaving aside the question of scientific praxis for a moment, Marx' doctrine of reflection, taken alone, would allow for knowledge of untransformed as well as of transformed objects. Consciousness at whatever level it has reached in its development would be able to reflect more or less adequately the object it encounters. The object itself at whatever level of transformation by industry - from untransformed to highly transformed - would also be reflected. Consciousness would not transform an in-itself into a for-us. In early history with only untransformed objects in existence and without a development of consciousness, awareness only slightly beyond animal awareness was possible, i.e., only an awareness of the immediate environment and of very simple relations. With a higher level of the development of

consciousness and with a higher level of the transformation of objects, the existence as well as the awareness of more complex relations and connections becomes possible, still without consciousness itself transforming the object.

However, if the argument of the *Theses on Feuerbach* that truth is established through praxis is taken to mean that scientific experiment transforms and constitutes the object in order to know it, and if this is accepted as the position of the *German Ideology*, then we could never know unmodified objects despite the fact that consciousness is not involved in the constitution of objects. But this is not the only possible interpretation of the *German Ideology*. It is possible that proving truth through praxis simply means that practical manipulation and transformation by scientific experiment is necessary to reveal and thus know the object without modifying it fundamentally or permanently.[95] The result of a chemical interaction might involve the transformation and disappearance of the original agents but only of those used in the experiment and for the purpose of understanding the actual properties of the original agents. If this is so, then scientific praxis would be different from industrial praxis, which does through history change the object such that the original characteristics of the object are fundamentally modified - for example, ecological transformation of the environment, genetically developed grains, as well as, of course, the transformation of human needs and desires.

On this interpretation, transformation of the subject and of the object through industry and intercourse would be an important part of the development of consciousness, but transformation and loss of the object would not necessarily occur in a specific process of knowing. The historical transformation of consciousness would remain central to Marx' theory of knowledge, but it would not be impossible (as far as scientific praxis goes) to know unmodified objects. This is quite compatible with the materialist doctrine that the historical development of material conditions determines consciousness.

I suggest that this is Marx' position in the *German Ideology*. At no place in the text does he suggest that scientific praxis fundamentally transforms the object. In discussing the relation of science and industry he attributes transformation of the object only to industry. In fact, he claims that natural science is given not only its aim but its material by industry. If he held that scientific praxis transformed the object, this would have been the place to say it or at least imply it, and one would think that Marx would have done so if this was his view.[96]

However, there is one more obstacle to the possibility of knowing prehuman nature. It may be the case that the industrial transformation

of nature has been so thorough-going that it is impossible to know untransformed nature even granting that consciousness and scientific praxis do not transform the object in obstructive ways. Despite the fact that there are passages which may seem to suggest that the industrial transformation of nature has been of such magnitude that knowledge of prehuman nature is impossible, I do not think that this is Marx' view. The passage in which this seems to be suggested is one in which Marx is countering Feuerbach's "contemplative materialism". Marx points out that knowledge of the nature which Feuerbach finds at hand does not amount to the adequate knowledge which Feuerbach thinks it does because nature is not an unchanging given; it is transformed through history. This is not to say that knowledge of earlier or prehuman nature is impossible, but simply that it would require a different approach than Feuerbach's. Evidence that Marx thinks that knowledge of prehuman unmodified nature is not made impossible by scientific or industrial transformation is that he himself discusses original natural conditions, the first premises of human existence, and he claims that they can be verified empirically.[97]

There is one final issue that we must discuss. Marx says that he holds to "the priority of external nature". The meaning of this is not immediately clear because, besides the priority of external nature, Marx also holds that all knowledge presupposes the historical-industrial transformation of nature and consciousness and he frequently asserts that human beings and nature cannot be taken as separate or independent.[98] By "external nature" (which has priority), then, Marx might mean: (1) an underlying substratum to be distinguished from nature's appearance - the latter being inseparable from and determined by social transformation, (2) original nature before it underwent social transformation, isolated instances of which can still be found - Marx mentions "Australian coral islands of recent origin"[99], or (3) simply nature, socially transformed or untransformed, as it objectively confronts us at any time.

We can easily reject the first possibility since Marx frequently denies that there is any reality independent of actual empirical existence: there is no essence or substratum grasped by concepts or categories that has any significance for the reality of nature.[100]

Nor can we accept the second possibility. Marx accuses Feuerbach of holding this position and rejects it as his own.[101] However, in one passage which Marx decided to cross out in the final manuscript, he had claimed that original geological, oro-hydrographical, and climatic conditions (before historical transformation had occurred) not only determined original human beings but continues to determine "the entire

further development . . . of men up to the present time".[102] This would be a solid doctrine of the priority of original external nature. It would not be consistent with the position that these conditions and their effect on human beings are actually transformed historically and mediated socially.

In the *1844 Manuscripts* Marx could not have accepted the priority of original nature because his doctrine of essence committed him to the position that the transformation of nature through industry meant an essential development of nature toward the realization of its truth. The *German Ideology* starts from external untransformed nature and traces the development of its historical transformation - we have a natural basis and a historical modification of it.[103] If Marx holds no doctrine of essence, he cannot hold that transformed nature is a higher realization of original nature. Thus, we must say that all stages of the transformation of nature are equally real in the sense that there is an actual transformation of the object itself and its actual causal influence on human beings. The transformation is not of an object for-us with the object in-itself remaining unchanged in its causal influence. The social and human realm are parts of nature; they are not independent of nature such that their effect on nature is to produce something less real, a reality merely for-us to be distinguished from nature in-itself. There are no levels of reality to nature - no split between appearance and essence, no higher realization of nature, no preferred status for original untransformed nature. Nature is continuously transformed but always confronts us as the objective basis of all reality.

Knowledge of nature (whether original or socially transformed), since neither consciousness nor scientific praxis constitute or transform it, is possible in so far as scientific technique and instruments, as they develop along with consciousness and industry, can be effective in studying it.

CHAPTER THREE

Marx' Dialectical Method (1857-1883)

In the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* Marx' method and epistemology are quite different from the positions he held on these matters in either the *1844 Manuscripts* or the *German Ideology*. Despite these differences, what Marx does in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* is to find a middle ground between his two earlier outlooks and indeed to work elements of them into a new synthesis. It is my contention then that neither the essential unity view, which accepts no fundamental shifts in Marx' thought and often tends to see his epistemology as a social subjectivism, nor Althusser's view, which argues a complete rupture and characterizes Marx' epistemology as a radical anti-empiricism, is an accurate description of the development of Marx' thought.

I. DIALECTICAL METHOD

Let us begin by trying to understand Marx' new method and how it differs from his earlier views on method. The new method which Marx elaborates in the *Grundrisse* and employs in *Capital* he calls the "dialectic method". [1]

It begins by considering general characteristics common to different historical periods of production so that by comparison it will be able to identify elements which are not general but specific to the historical period in question.[2]

It follows from this that we cannot simply and straightaway begin to study a historical period. Science does not begin with the actual empirically given economic reality, the real and the concrete, just as it presents itself to us. Economists of the 17th century, Marx tells us, began this way, and their first task was to subject this actual living whole to analysis in order to establish a set of simple abstract concepts, e.g., division of labor, value, money, etc. Only at this point was it possible to begin to distinguish specific from common characteristics, and only at this point could the real construction of economic systems begin.

The economists of the seventeenth century, e.g., always begin with

> the living whole . . . but they always conclude by discovering through analysis a small number of determinant, abstract, general relations . . . As soon as these individual moments had been more or less firmly established and abstracted, there began the economic systems, which ascended from the simple relations, such as labour, division of labour, exchange value, to the level of the state, exchange between nations, and the world market. The latter is obviously the scientifically correct method.[3]

Capital, for example, begins with an analysis of such an abstract concept, the commodity, the main category, "the economic cell-form", of capitalism.[4] It then seeks to discover the relations which hold between this and other abstract categories and to trace out their interconnection in the epoch being studied. One ascends from simple categories toward a conceptual grasp of the whole as a "rich totality of many determinations and relations". Only in this way does an adequate scientific grasp of the concrete replace the vague and chaotic impression one had at the start. The concrete, for Marx, is the organized and articulated concentration of many determinations and relations. It is not given at the start for thought but is the outcome of a process of analysis and investigation. The actual concrete, it is true, is the point of departure for real development, but the concrete for thought is a result. The concrete "appears in the process of thinking, therefore, as a process of concentration, as a result, not as a point of departure, even though it is the point of departure in reality and hence also the point of departure for observation and conception". [5]

In studying modern society, the sequence in which the categories are presented and dealt with will be determined by the relationship which they are discovered to have in modern society, not the order in which the categories developed historically. Marx wants to stay clear of Hegel's idealist dialectic. The process which begins with abstract categories and moves toward the concrete is simply, for Marx, a method, the way in which our thought comes to grasp the concrete. It is not to be identified, as it was for Hegel, with the actual historical genesis of the concrete. This process of thought has no influence on the production of the actual concrete.

> Hegel fell into the illusion of conceiving the real as the product of thought concentrating itself, probing its own depths, and unfolding itself out of itself, by itself, whereas the method of rising from the abstract to the concrete is only the way in which thought appropriates the concrete, reproducing it as the concrete in the mind. But this is by no means the process by which the concrete

itself comes into being.[6]

But even if one takes care to avoid Hegel's idealism, the method of presenting the categories in the sequence in which they appeared historically is still erroneous. In rejecting Proudhon's historical method, Marx says in the *Poverty of Philosophy*: "How, indeed, could the single logical formula of movement, of sequence, of time, explain the structure of society, in which all relations coexist simultaneously and support one another?" The straightforward historical method (which Marx endorsed in the *German Ideology*) will not explain the connectedness, the synchronicity, the social structure of relations. Only an analysis and reconstruction of the totality of these relations themselves can do so. Such an analysis is in fact a prerequisite to understanding historical development. In the *Grundrisse*, Marx says:

> It would therefore be unfeasible and wrong to let the economic categories follow one another in the same sequence as that in which they were historically decisive. The sequence is determined, rather, by their relations to one another in modern bourgeois society, which is precisely the opposite of that which seems to be their natural order or which corresponds to their historical development. The point is not the historic position of the economic relations in the succession of different forms of society. . . . Rather, their order within modern bourgeois society.[7]

In each historical period a specific form of production predominates over and thus ranks, influences, and structures the rest of society in a specific way. "It is a general illumination which bathes all the other colours and modifies their particularity." Thus, Marx, says: "Nothing seems more natural than to begin with ground rent, with landed property . . . the first form of production of all more or less settled societies . . . But nothing would be more erroneous." In the feudal period, for example, landed property was predominant and it modified capital and industry. In modern society, the reverse is the case; capital and industry predominate over and modify landed property. To begin by studying the earlier historical structure would mean that capital, industry, and labor would appear subordinate to landed property and that surplus value would appear to arise only from agricultural labor. If one begins with the structural interconnection of categories where landed property predominates, it will be impossible to reach an understanding of modern society where a different form of production prevails and structures the interconnection of categories in a radically different way, such that other, or transformed, categories are key.

Marx says: "Ground rent cannot be understood without capital. But capital can certainly be understood without ground rent." Marx also says in *Capital* that the category of merchant's capital

> is incapable by itself of promoting and explaining the transition from one mode of production to another. Within capitalist production merchant's capital is reduced from its former independent existence to a special phase in the investment of capital . . . The special social conditions that take shape with the development of merchant's capital are here no longer paramount. On the contrary, wherever merchant's capital still predominates we find backward conditions.[8]

Each category is stamped and molded by the particular structure of the period. It will not be exactly the same category which appears in a later period. Thus the later categories and their structure cannot be deduced from the earlier; each category can only be fully understood in the context of the structure of categories to which it belongs. Categories and their structure thus have to be fundamentally re-understood in each new epoch. The historical transition from the scientific comprehension of the structure of one period to that of another can best be described as a conceptual revolution - Engels likens it to the scientific revolution in which Lavoisier overthrew Priestly's phlogistic chemistry.[9]

As different forms of production develop and emerge, they structure and modify the categories in specific ways, especially in two important ways. First, in earlier, less developed forms of social organization categories stand out clearly in their simplicity and "express dominant relations of a less developed whole". In later, more highly developed forms of social organization the category is preserved but structured as subordinate; it expresses "subordinate relations of a more developed whole". For example, an individual or clan in early history may well possess, but *property* as a developed juridical relation only arises later in history and is determined by and subordinate to a complex social structure. Or we might compare money in the form of cattle or gold in early history to credit in modern times. Second, in later history the category becomes less particular and more abstract. For example, the Physiocrats were able to see that labor was the creator of all wealth, but given the dominance of landed property, only a particular sort of labor, agricultural labor, was seen as such. Only classical political economy was finally able to grasp labor in general, abstract labor, as the source of all wealth. Only in a society where specific forms of labor, labor linked to particular individuals and activities, has become

irrelevant, where individuals thus transfer with ease from one form of labor to another, was this possible. Categories reach their fullest development, they become general abstractions, only in a highly developed social organization, when the reality which the category expresses has reached its highest development.[10]

In the *1844 Manuscripts* and the *German Ideology* (1845-6) Marx outlined two quite different methods; the dialectical method first outlined in the *Grundrisse* (1857-8) is a third new method. In certain ways it constitutes a radical shift from either of the two earlier versions, but in other ways it preserves some of the opposed elements of the first two and works them into a synthesis.

In the *1844 Manuscripts* and the *German Ideology* three different processes take place in a parallel manner: (1) the historical generation of the actual concrete, (2) the historical rise and development of categories which express the actual concrete, and (3) the order in which the method takes up and connects the categories. All three of these processes were parallel. At this point the differences began. In the *1844 Manuscripts*, the second and third processes influenced the first; i.e., the historical rise of categories as well as their theoretical or methodological articulation in science were important elements which actually played a role in determining the historical development of the actual concrete (the actual concrete, of course, reciprocally determined the last two processes). In the *German Ideology* Marx shifted to the opposite pole. He denied that either the historical rise of the categories or their theoretical-methodological employment had any impact independent of praxis on the development of the actual concrete. Indeed, only the reverse was the case; the actual concrete determined not only the historical rise of the categories but even the role and significance they had in science. The method of the *German Ideology* was based upon straightforward historical-empirical study of the given; development of the concrete was due to praxis; and categories were results of this process which summed things up. Independent constructive activity played no significant role in the articulation of scientific theory. Theory simply resulted from the empirical study of the material much as consciousness resulted from the historical development of material conditions.[11]

In the *Grundrisse*, the third process, the method, is severed from the first and second, from the historical generation of the actual concrete and from the historical rise of categories. Against the *1844 Manuscripts* and like the *German Ideology*, Marx holds that scientific theory plays no independent role in determining the development of the actual concrete. Against the *German Ideology* and like the *1844 Manuscripts*,

he rejects a sheer empirical study of the given and denies that categories merely sum up historical results. The method requires the independent construction of a concrete for thought. Accurate empirical investigation is possible only after a theoretical paradigm, the concrete for thought, has been constructed. But what is constructed is a concrete for thought, not the actual concrete as in the *1844 Manuscripts*.

Thus I do not agree with Althusser's view that Marx' thought undergoes a radical *coupure epistémologique*, which implies that no element belonging to the structure of Marx' early thought remains or has the same meaning in the structure of his later thought. I obviously agree that there are shifts in the continuity of Marx' thought; nevertheless, throughout this chapter, I will argue that the views of the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* incorporate and recombine many of the earlier views.[12]

It is my view that the method outlined in the *Grundrisse* is the method Marx follows in *Capital*; however, this view is not accepted by all. Sayer argues that the method of the *Grundrisse* differs from that of *Capital*. In the *Grundrisse* Marx holds that we should begin with general abstract categories "which obtain in more or less all forms of society" - what Sayer calls "transhistorical categories" - and then by comparison seek to identify the categories which make up the inner structure of bourgeois society.

Sayer argues that in *Capital* Marx abandons this original intention to start with transhistorical categories and instead starts with the commodity which is a historical particular gotten through empirical analysis of the concrete.[13] Sayer fails to see that the 'commodity', with which *Capital* begins, is in fact a transhistorical category.

For Marx we find simple abstract transhistorical categories in two places. They can be arrived at through analysis of modern society and they can express simple relations characteristic of at least some lower societies in early history.[14] These simple categories develop historically - from categories which express simple predominant relations in lower forms of society to categories which express more complex and abstract but subordinate relations in higher forms of society. "Thus, although the simpler category may have existed historically before the more concrete, it can achieve its full (intensive and extensive) development precisely in a combined form of society while the more concrete category was more fully developed in a less developed form of society."[15]

In order to understand the higher more complex society, the political economist cannot begin, as we have seen, by tracing the historical development of these categories or of the concrete itself;

instead, the political economist begins with the simple categories gotten through analysis of modern society, seeks to distinguish by comparison their specific modern from their common transhistorical characteristics, and seeks to understand their interconnection in modern society. In this way, the political economist comes to understand the actual complex concrete which stamped and molded these categories and is able to bring out the complex relations which are historically specific to modern society. This complex structure of categories, the concrete for thought, contrary to the *German Ideology,* is clearly necessary before an accurate empirical study of the actual concrete or its historical development is possible.

It is also clear that we can grasp simple transhistorical categories (e.g., labor) by relatively straightforward empirical analysis of modern society. The question is whether or not we can grasp the fully developed abstract category and the full intensity of the complex historically specific relations which it expresses (e.g., abstract labor as the source of all wealth) by similar relatively straightforward empirical analysis. It would seem not. It would seem that this abstract complexity would only begin to emerge toward the end; i.e., only after we had grasped the structure of categories, the complex relations of the concrete, could we begin to see accurately the full complexity reflected in each of the categories or how the complex concrete had stamped, molded, and transformed them through history.[16]

Thus we begin with simple transhistorical categories, reconstruct the concrete for thought, and only along the way would the full abstractness, complexity, and historical specificity of these categories begin to emerge. Thus we could not grasp these complex categories - what Sayer calls "historical particulars" - simply from the start through direct observation and analysis.

At any rate, the 'commodity', with which *Capital* begins, is a simple transhistorical category. To see this it is crucial to notice that Chapter 1 of *Capital* does not set out to discuss capitalism exclusively. Rather it discusses any form of exchange or commodity producing society in general. For example, Marx tells us that we can find commodities in precapitalist economies.[17] Also, Marx specifically excludes the discussion of wage labor from Chapter 1; he says "Wages is a category that, as yet, has no existence at the present stage of our investigation."[18] A society without wage labor is obviously not capitalist. Furthermore, money is only discussed as a medium of exchange not in its specific capitalist form as an end in itself.[19] Marx explicitly states that even fetishism can occur in precapitalist societies.[20] Capitalism proper is not introduced until Chapters 3 and 4, where Marx

finally discusses two forms of exchange characterized by the two formulae: C-M-C and M-C-M', only the latter of which is the capitalist form of exchange.

The 'commodity' then is clearly a transhistorical category. It appears as a simple abstraction which can be grasped through analysis in higher stages of social development and it existed as well in other earlier and lower forms of society[21]; the point then is to begin with this simple transhistorical category, distinguish general characteristics from specific capitalist ones, and discover interconnections with other categories in modern society in order to work toward an understanding of the concrete. I can see no significant difference between the two methods here.[22]

We must now make clear the sense (not at all made clear by Sayer) in which we do begin with the empirical concrete. What Marx calls the scientifically correct method, it is true, starts only from simple categories and then seeks to reconstruct the concrete. But there is a step which must occur before the scientifically correct method can get started. We must discover the simple categories and we do so only by analysis of the empirical concrete. Furthermore, these categories must be firmly established. Economists of the 17th century, Marx tells us, proceeded in this way.[23]

But it would seem that they did not adequately establish these simple categories, or at least this is suggested by the fact that Marx did not complete Volume I of *Capital*, which begins with the simple categories and works toward the reconstruction of the concrete, before he began to write Volume III, which actually arrives at, or, I think we can at the same time say, starts from, the surface empirical concrete.[24] From what Engels tells us, Marx wrote in 1861-3 a rough draft of Volume I which, however, did not include Chapters 1 through 3. After he began but before he completed this draft, i.e., in the middle of it, he developed material that would later appear in Volume III. Next, in 1864-5 Marx reworked the material for Volume III but did not give it a final form (Engels later published this draft as Volume III of *Capital*). Finally, only at this point did Marx rework Volume I and put it to press in 1867 with the addition of the first three chapters which were a rewritten version of the *Critique of Political Economy* of 1859.

Chapter 1 of Volume I began with the simple abstract category of value (which was intimately connected with the concept of the commodity), but we only come to understand the full complexity of the category of value in Volume III, where we are told that commodities exchange at their values (i.e., that we find the category of value in its simple pure form) only at lower levels of society, whereas in later

capitalist society commodity prices in fact diverge from their values.[25] On the other hand, this simple abstract category of value is firmly established in Volume III by analyzing and comparing an abstract model of simple commodity production with the empirical surface of developed capitalism.[26]

In other words, one of the things that Volume III does is to analyze surface phenomena in an attempt to arrive at simple categories and to establish them firmly. It also begins to distinguish transhistorical characteristics from specifically capitalist ones.[27] Having gotten these simple categories during his work on Volume III, Marx then, in the finished version of Volume I, takes up the scientifically correct method and begins to work back toward the empirical concrete.

There is an important sense in which Marx must work in such a circle. He holds that it is impossible empirically to study the concrete adequately without an articulated paradigm. This paradigm can only be constructed by beginning with simple categories and by grasping their interconnection. But the categories cannot originally be gotten except by analysis of the empirical concrete. So we must begin with the obscure and chaotic empirical concrete, abstract by analysis simple categories, and then science proper can begin. Science reconstructs the concrete out of these categories, and this time arrives at a clear conception of the concrete.

At this point accurate empirical study and an understanding of historical development are possible, as well, it would seem, as a grasp of the full intensity or complexity of what the abstract category expresses. We start from the concrete, we finish with it, and furthermore, we must, obviously, even check the various stages in the construction of our paradigm against the concrete as we go. The concrete is presupposed and brought into play all the way along, but we fully and scientifically understand it only at the end. Furthermore, judging from Engels' description of the way *Capital* was written, it was necessary to go through such a circle more than once. After all, Marx had worked his way through similar material as early as the *Grundrisse* (1857-8).[28]

II. DIALECTICAL METHOD AND HEGEL

Many of those who write on Marx' *Grundrisse* and *Capital* spend a good deal of time discussing Marx' relation to Hegel. Marx himself tells us in *Capital* that in the chapter on value he "coquetted with the mode of expression peculiar to" Hegel.[29] And in a letter to Engels he

says:

> I have thrown overboard the whole doctrine of profit as it has existed up to now. In the method of treatment the fact that by mere accident I again glanced through Hegel's *Logic* has been of great service to me - Freiligrath found some volumes of Hegel which originally belonged to Bakunin and sent them to me as a present. If there should ever be time for such work again, I would greatly like to make accessible to the ordinary human intelligence, in two or three printer's sheets, what is rational in the method Hegel discovered, but at the same time enveloped in mysticism . . . [30]

Here, Marx clearly says that his return to the study of Hegel's *Logic* influenced him. However, he actually suggests no more than that it influenced his method of dealing with the doctrine of profit. Nevertheless, most scholars who think that the later Marx was influenced by Hegel, think that he was mainly influenced by Hegel's *Logic*. McLellan, for example, thinks that this is the case, and suggests that it was Hegel's *Phenomenology* which most interested Marx in 1844.[31]

I have no wish to deny that the later Marx was influenced by the *Logic*, but if we want to locate the source of Marx' method, I think we must look to the *Phenomenology*. There, though not yet stripped of its "mysticism", we find the general outlines of the method rather clearly layed out.

Hegel's *Phenomenology* can be viewed as divided into three major parts: 'Consciousness', 'Spirit', and 'Absolute Spirit'. The first part confines itself to a discussion of the stages of individual consciousness. The second part discusses social or cultural consciousness. The third part discusses religious consciousness and God or the Absolute.

Toward the end of the first part, Hegel gives us a relatively clear insight into the way in which the *Phenomenology* is organized. He is concerned, at this point, with explaining how the transition from 'Consciousness' to 'Spirit' will occur. The first topic that will be dealt with when we finally arrive at 'Spirit' will be the cultural community of the ancient Greek *polis*. Anticipating this, Hegel says:

> The wisest men of antiquity for that reason declared that wisdom consists in living in accordance with the customs of one's own nation. From that happy state, however, of having attained its destiny, and of living in it, the self-consciousness, which in the first instance is only immediately and in principle spirit, has broken away; or perhaps it has not yet attained it: for both can be said with

equal truth.[32]

To understand how Spirit has both broken away from the happy state of the Greek *polis* but at the same time not yet attained it, we must begin to understand the method which the *Phenomenology* follows. The *Phenomenology* does not proceed historically. It begins with an abstract discussion of individual consciousness and only then moves on to a discussion of cultural consciousness, the first stage of which examines the Greek *polis*. Thus, the development of consciousness as presented in the first part of the *Phenomenology* has not yet attained the consciousness of the Greek *polis*. But at the same time it would be impossible for the *Phenomenology* to trace the development of consciousness as it does unless, in history, consciousness had already achieved the level which it did in the Greek *polis* and had gone beyond it. In this sense, Spirit has already broken away from the Greek *polis*. Thus, we have two different sorts of movement here: a historical movement past the Greek *polis* and an abstract conceptual movement toward the Greek *polis*, and the latter would be impossible to trace if the former had not already actually occurred.[33]

Moreover, we find the same two movements at the level of the *Phenomenology* as a whole. In the *Phenomenology*, Hegel wants to 'prove' the Absolute. He does not begin with the Absolute as an unproven assumption. The Absolute emerges only at the very end of the *Phenomenology*. Only then is it 'proven'. The Absolute contains the sum total of all objective reality and at the same time is subjectively aware of being all truth - it contains all reality within itself such that it only has itself as its object.[34]

How is it possible to prove the Absolute? Like any first principle it cannot be demonstrated in the sense of being deduced from other principles. What Hegel does in the *Phenomenology* is to examine all possible forms of consciousness beginning with the most simple and moving on to the most complex. Along the way, he wants to show that none of these forms of consciousness can stand on its own. None of them will be able to explain itself fully or to justify itself. Some difficulty will always arise; some contradiction will emerge; or some problem will develop. This will force us on to a more complex form of consciousness in order to explain or justify the earlier form. We will be forced to move to more and more complex forms of consciousness, none of which will be fully able to justify itself, until we reach the Absolute. In this way the Absolute will be 'proven'.

In the *Logic*, Hegel tells us that the *Phenomenology* justified the Absolute by giving a deduction of it.[35] By a 'deduction', Hegel has in mind, I think, something very much like what Kant meant by a

deduction. Hegel tries to show that the Absolute is a necessary presupposition for any form of consciousness to be possible, and only with the Absolute will we be able to grasp reality adequately. The Absolute can be likened to a paradigm which will allow all the preceding forms of consciousness to fall into place, be explained, and be justified as moments of one interconnected and organic unity.[36]

Thus, the entire *Phenomenology* deals with abstractions or concepts which are only formed into a total, integrated, concrete structure when we reach the Absolute, and only this integrated structure allows us finally to understand reality and history. Throughout the course of the *Phenomenology*, we are never in history. The entire movement is a purely conceptual one. Moreover, this is clearly Hegel's own view. In the third part of the *Phenomenology*, at the beginning of the section, 'Religion', Hegel tells us that the course which the various forms of consciousness have traversed is,

> in relation to religion, not to be pictured as a temporal sequence. It is only spirit in its entirety that is in time, and the shapes assumed, which are specific embodiments of the whole of spirit as such, present themselves in sequence one after the other. For it is only the whole which properly has reality, and hence the form of pure freedom relatively to anything else, the form which takes expression as time.[37]

Once we reach the level of 'Religion' or 'Absolute Spirit', we see that all the stages of consciousness that we have moved through as seemingly separate and distinct forms are now to be understood as moments, determinations, contained within one Absolute Spirit. They are the "mundane existence of spirit as a whole".[38] Spirit is the paradigm which makes them fall into their proper place. It follows then, that once we have reached this level, we would have to return and move through these forms of consciousness again as historical forms.[39] If time does not exist until we reach the Absolute, certainly history does not exist till then. This means, contrary to the views of most commentators, that even the second part of the *Phenomenology* (which deals with cultural consciousness, the rise of the modern state, the Enlightenment, and the French Revolution) does not deal with history. To understand this, we must notice that even a superficial reading of the Introduction to the *Philosophy of History* shows that in Hegel's view history requires an interaction between three elements: God or the Idea, social and political institutions, and the consciousness of individuals. In the *Philosophy of History*, actual history begins with all three of these elements already present and each develops in interaction with the

others. In the *Phenomenology*, we only reach the point where these three elements are simultaneously present at the very end. Only then do we arrive at reality, time, and history.[40]

What the *Phenomenology* does is to abstract out parts of reality for analysis and leave out of consideration or bracket the rest of reality. In 'Consciousness', the first part, we abstract out for analysis only individual consciousness and bracket cultural consciousness and religious consciousness. In 'Spirit', the second part, we abstract out for analysis both individual consciousness and cultural consciousness but we leave religious consciousness (except a dim perception of it as a mere 'beyond' [41]) bracketed. We might be willing to call what occurs in this section historical, but Hegel is not. Only in the third part, 'Absolute Spirit', do we finally have all three elements before us. Only here do we return to reality and time; only here do we have the possibility of history.

Hegel engages in this process of abstraction in order to be able to move from the simplest forms of consciousness to the more complex. And he does this in order to give a deduction of the Absolute. It is not even the case that the stages of consciousness are arranged in their historical order. Hegel says: "The arrangement now assumed by the forms and shapes which have thus far appeared, is different from the way they had appeared in their own order."[42] Thus, only when we reach the Absolute do we reach history and only then would it be possible to study actual history. The *Philosophy of History* presupposes the Absolute which was established by the *Phenomenology*.

Thus, the *Phenomenology* works conceptually toward the possibility of history. Nevertheless, the *Phenomenology* could not have been written unless history had already occurred and consciousness had developed historically to the point where a *Phenomenology* could be written.[43]

As we can see, the method of the *Phenomenology* is much like Marx' method, at least in broad outline. Marx, however, does not think that religion and God are necessary to understand history, nor does he identify the paradigm which makes history intelligible with God or the Absolute. Furthermore, he certainly does not think that history is the realization of God or the Absolute.

III. DIALECTICAL METHOD AND HISTORICAL MATERIALISM

We must now try to understand the relationship between Marx' dialectical method and his historical materialism as well as how his views on the latter have changed. Marx holds that interactions between

forces and relations of production determine our social, political, and intellectual life.[44] This is not to be understood as a metaphysical but as a sociological form of determinism. It has been the case hitherto in history that material conditions determine consciousness, but under Communism the reverse will be the case. As individuals and their relations become more universally and comprehensively developed, individuals will be able collectively and consciously to control these relations.[45]

In the *Grundrisse* Marx begins to loosen up his earlier notion of the determination of consciousness by material conditions. He ceases to hold, as he did in the *German Ideology*, that the development of consciousness directly parallels the general development of production. The two developments can be uneven. The flowering of consciousness can even be "out of all proportion to the general development of society". At a low level of the development of production, consciousness, as it did in Greek art, especially the epic, can attain a scope, power, and comprehensiveness unattainable at a higher level of the development of production. Just, it seems, as categories become more complex and abstract but subordinate in the modern world, so consciousness becomes more abstract and complex but its scope is narrowed.[46]

Less than two years later in the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, Marx continues to hold that the material transformation of economic conditions can be precisely determined, but now, in opposition to the *German Ideology,* he implies that ideological forms in general cannot be: "it is always necessary to distinguish between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, artistic or philosophic - in short, ideological forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out."[47]

Consciousness seems to have gained a certain independence. The question then is how far Marx moves in this direction.

In the *Grundrisse* Marx views society as a totality in which different moments are distinctions within a unity. A specific form of production determines a specific form of consumption, distribution, and exchange as well as definite relations between these moments. In a certain sense a change in any one of the moments will change the others, e.g., expanded exchange will increase production. Ollman argues that this doctrine of internal relations implies that no single element predominates over the others; all elements are mutually determining. In the *1844 Manuscripts* Marx held this sort of position, but in the *Grundrisse* he is quite clear that production predominates in

determining the other moments: "Production predominates not only over itself . . . but over the other moments as well . . . A definite production thus determines a definite consumption, distribution, and exchange, as well as definite relations between these different moments." [48]

Marx (echoing the *1844 Manuscripts*) is willing to go so far as to admit that need and consciousness provide the purpose or goal of production and thus in a certain sense condition production (e.g., a product which satisfies no subjective need, Marx is willing to say, is not a real product); nevertheless, he always holds that production not only produces the object which satisfies the subject's need, it also produces the very need itself.[49]

Marx' position on the relationship of consciousness to material conditions is much more subtle and complex than it was earlier. In Section I of this chapter we noticed that the third process, the method, was severed from the first two processes. We must also notice that there is a subtle lack of parallel between the first two processes themselves - between the historical development of the actual concrete and the historical rise of categories. The categories which reflect a historical epoch in which one form of production predominates will not lead to the understanding of a succeeding epoch in which a different form of production predominates and which is reflected in transformed categories.[50] This makes a straightforward empirical study of the historical development of production, like that of the *German Ideology*, useless. We first need an articulated theoretical structure, a model of the high point of the process of development, before we can understand the earlier development and the transition from one epoch to another.

In one respect Marx has not changed his mind here; the earlier historical stage did contain the material forces that actually caused its breakdown and its development to the higher stage. But Marx now holds that the earlier stage was incapable of giving rise to the categories, the developed abstractions, that could explain the transition. This only becomes possible after the higher stage has actually established itself.[51] Given this new conception of things it becomes obvious why Marx in the Preface would have to deny that scientific precision is possible at the level of ideology. It also follows from this that Marx' science is not intended to predict inevitable results as we shall see in Section IV of this chapter.[52]

How then can we sum up the relationship of consciousness to material conditions for the later Marx? Scientific consciousness - the reconstruction of the concrete for thought - is not directly determined by the actual concrete, by material conditions. Reconstruction, it is true,

only becomes possible given the development of the actual concrete (the actual concrete determines how categories must be structured if they are to express reality accurately), but material conditions do not determine processes of thought[53], and the character and content of these processes in scientific theory, art, etc., are not traceable with precision from material conditions as Marx in the *German Ideology* thought they were. Yet, Marx moves only so far in this direction. At the same time, he says that ideas are not understandable on their own apart from material conditions; ideas must be explained from material conditions.[54] Furthermore, ideas and material conditions are not mutually determining as they were in the *1844 Manuscripts*. Theoretical ideas do not change material conditions. In the *Grundrisse*, Marx says that for theoretical knowledge, the object "retains its *autonomous* existence outside the head *just as before*" and in *Capital* he says that the theoretical determination of value "in no way alters the mode in which that determination takes place".[55]

Thus, we can say that the historical development of the actual concrete is a necessary condition of our ideas, but alone will neither produce them nor explain them. The theoretical construction of a concrete for thought is a necessary condition for our understanding the actual concrete, but alone will neither produce it nor explain its next stage of development. In science we begin not with material conditions, but with categories. An accurate understanding of the actual concrete is only possible as interpretation within the context of a theoretical paradigm. Only then can we return to and understand the earlier development of the actual concrete. And only at that point can we begin to understand even the development of our own ideas and our own science.

I have already argued that the method outlined in the *Grundrisse* is consistent with that employed in *Capital* and that this new method is quite different from that described in the *German Ideology*. We must now say a word about the *Critique of Political Economy* which may seem to raise certain problems here.

Rader rejects the view that Marx' thought undergoes shifts and developments. Instead, Rader examines three different models: (1) a fundamentalist base-superstructure model, where base and superstructure are distinct and externally related, and where the former determines the latter; (2) a model of dialectical interaction between base and superstructure, where base and superstructure are distinct but reciprocally determine each other; and (3) a model of organic totality which involves a complex web of internal relations and interactions ranked hierarchically.[56]

Very roughly speaking, we can say (Rader himself does not argue this) that those who argue for the predominance of material conditions often tend to use the first or the second model and to rely on the *German Ideology* or the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*. Those who argue for mutual determinism use the third model and often tend to rely on the Introduction to the *Grundrisse*.[57] I agree that there are differences between these models and I do not deny that these differences are important, but I do want to defend the view that Marx' thought undergoes shifts and development.

If Marx held to one model in the *German Ideology* (1845-6), another in the *Grundrisse* (1857-8), then in the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*(1859) moved back to a model which at least in some ways was closer to that of the *German Ideology*, it might be argued that the correct way to interpret Marx' thought would be as a wavering between two models and not as a series of shifts and a development. The Preface, then, because in some respects it might seem to express views more like those of the *German Ideology* than like those of the *Grundrisse*, despite the fact that the Preface was written after the *Grundrisse*, is crucial here.

I would defend the theory of shifts and development in the following way: (1) In the Preface, where Marx outlines his theory of historical materialism (admittedly permeated by the dialectical base-superstructure model), he introduces his discussion as a restatement of views which he had developed earlier. He does not mention the *German Ideology* by name; after all it had never been published; but he is obviously referring to it when he says: "The study of this, which I began in Brussels . . . The general conclusion at which I arrived and which, once reached, became the guiding principle of my studies can be summarized as follows."[58] Marx then goes on in the Preface to give his famous formulation of historical materialism.[59] Marx also refers (though not by name) to the Introduction to the *Grundrisse* and says that he has omitted it here because it "anticipates results which still have to be substantiated" and thus would be confusing, but he does not repudiate it.[60] (2) At the end of his discussion of historical materialism in the Preface, presented as an account of his earlier views which continue to guide him, Marx diverges from those earlier views by suggesting, in agreement with the *Grundrisse*, not the *German Ideology*, that ideas cannot be traced with scientific precision from material conditions.[61] (3) Nevertheless, Marx never comes to hold, even in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*, as we have seen, that ideas (short of Communist society) determine material conditions. He does not move to a theory of mutual determinism,

which at least some writers claim to find in the *Grundrisse*.

Thus, I would argue that the *German Ideology*, the *Grundrisse*, the Preface, and *Capital* - all of them - agree in holding that material conditions predominate at least in the sense that ideas do not determine material conditions (there is no wavering here), and that the Preface after restating a position held in the *German Ideology*, goes on to diverge from those views and to agree with the *Grundrisse* in holding that ideas are not strictly determined.[62] There is a series of shifts and a development, not a wavering between two models.

But things are more complicated than this. One might admit, as Adamson does, that Marx' thought undergoes a series of shifts but still hold that we find contradictions, especially in the later writings.[63] In comparing the Preface of 1859 to Marx' other writings, Adamson says:

> By 1859, he [Marx] seems to have concluded that he had strayed too far from his earlier tendency not to establish abstractions and generalizations prior to empirical investigation itself. While he does not actually revert to the earlier empiricism, and while the presentation of *Capital* does, for the most part, conform to the ideas about investigation and exposition sketched in 1857, Marx does seem to have forgotten about, if not actually rejected, many of the other formulations of 1857 . . . [64]

I have already argued that *Capital* follows the method of the *Grundrisse*. Adamson seems to agree with this. But Adamson does not think that in 1859 (in the *Critique of Political Economy*) Marx employs this same method; he seems to think that Marx moves away from the method of the *Grundrisse* (1857) - the method which first establishes an abstract categorial structure before engaging in empirical investigation. I cannot agree with this. The *Critique of Political Economy* follows the very same method outlined in the *Grundrisse* and employed in *Capital*. Leaving aside the Preface for a moment, the *Critique* itself begins with abstract categories (commodity, exchange value, labor, money, etc.) and seeks to work them into an abstract structure. In fact, the first three chapters of *Capital* are a rewritten version of the *Critique of Political Economy*.[65] In this sense, then, there is no contradiction between the *Grundrisse*, the *Critique*, and *Capital*.[66]

There also at least seems to be a further mistake embedded in the passage cited from Adamson, namely, that the Preface of 1859 and the Introduction to the *Grundrisse* of 1857 are talking about the same thing. They are not. To see this we must recognize the difference between historical materialism and its dialectical method. Historical materialism

is a doctrine which makes a claim about the nature of historical reality and its development, namely, that the forces and relations of production interact, develop, and give rise to as well as determine an ideological superstructure. The dialectical method, on the other hand, is a doctrine concerning the way we go about studying the development produced by the forces and relations of production. Forces and relations of production and their development exist in the world whether we study them or not. We come to understand them through correct method. With the exception of one passage, the Preface does not discuss method at all; it outlines the doctrine of historical materialism. It talks about what can be discovered by the method, not the method itself. At this level it cannot contradict the 1857 Introduction - it is simply not talking about the same thing.

It is true that the Preface may suggest to some the method outlined in the *German Ideology* which rejects categories, involves direct empirical study of the forces and relations of production, and traces ideas from material conditions. But this method is not endorsed, it is not even discussed, in the Preface. Moreover, in the one passage of the Preface where method is alluded to, Marx in opposition to the *German Ideology* and in agreement with the *Grundrisse*, implies that ideas cannot be traced from material conditions with scientific precision.[67] Then, after the Preface, the *Critique of Political Economy*, as I have argued, begins by employing the method of the *Grundrisse*.

Thus, I cannot accept Adamson's view that in the later writings we have two Marxes or that Marx is to be seen as split between two contradictory models. In this sense, it seems to me, Rader comes closer to the truth than does Adamson.

IV. LAWS AND PREDICTION

In connection with his historical materialism, we must now discuss Marx' views on laws and the possibility of prediction in social science. Marx wants to deny that the same laws govern all social epochs. He agrees with Vico that human history differs from natural history in that "humans have made the former, but not the latter".[68] Marx is willing to admit that abstract unchanging laws of nature exist, but only when humans have not interfered with nature.[69] In the 'Afterword' to the second German edition of *Capital*, Marx quotes a description of his method given by a Russian reviewer, and Marx seems to agree that the description is correct. The reviewer claims that Marx understands social movement "as a process of natural history, governed by laws . . . independent of human will . . . " It is a "phenomenon analogous to the

history of evolution in other branches of biology". At the same time the reviewer admits that for Marx the same laws do not govern all periods of history. Here and elsewhere we can see that for Marx social laws are like laws of nature in that they do not appear to have been made by us; they act independently of our will and consciousness. They appear to be natural and eternal. But Marx also makes it quite clear in *Capital* that social laws are unlike natural laws in two senses. Social laws undergo development and in fact they are made by us. They result from specific historical modes of human interaction and are valid within those limits alone. However, as we shall see, when fetishism is overcome, social laws will no longer even appear as natural laws - laws which are not made by us. While the point that laws are made by us is not made by the reviewer, what he does say seems to come close enough for Marx to accept it.[70]

Much has been made of Marx' characterization of laws as "tendencies working with iron necessity toward inevitable results". We must decide how to understand this statement. In the first place, we must notice (as McMurtry correctly points out) that there is no mention of "inevitable results" in the original German.[71] Marx also makes it quite clear elsewhere that he is not holding to a "historico-philosophic theory of the general path every people is fated to tread whatever the historical circumstances in which it finds itself". Karl Popper is clearly wrong when he argues that Marx attempts to make unconditional predictions. For Marx, laws do not automatically and mechanically assert themselves regardless of empirical conditions as Popper suggests. Marx tells us that the so-called historical inevitability of capitalism is limited to conditions which he thinks are given in Western Europe and in general he is quite clear that laws operate, hold good, only given specific conditions. [72]

Moreover, Marx says that "even when a society has got upon the right track for the discovery of the natural laws of its movement . . . it can neither clear by bold leaps, nor remove by legal enactments, the obstacles offered by the successive phases of its normal development. But it can shorten and lessen the birth-pangs."[73]

These laws are neither inevitable nor automatic. The laws regulating capitalist society are not moving automatically and inevitably toward capitalism's demise and the creation of socialism. This will only occur given certain specific conditions. The passage just quoted does suggest that we are rather strictly bound by these laws and cannot escape them - it is simply that we can speed things up a bit. However, if we notice that elsewhere Marx admits that accidents play an important role in history, then it also follows that we cannot count on these laws

to realize themselves and we cannot be sure when they will. These laws will not guarantee the realization of socialism. It is simply that an understanding of them will help us to guide our praxis and to develop a better strategy for realizing socialism. Marx says:

> World history would indeed be very easy to make if the struggle were taken up only on the condition of infallibly favourable chances. It would on the other hand be of a very mystical nature, if "accidents" played no part . . . . But acceleration and delay are very much dependent upon such "accidents", including the "accident" of the character of the people who first heads the movement.[74]

The point here, as with Marx' discussion of the Communist Party in the *Manifesto*, is that scientific understanding in the social realm is not expected to predict inevitable results so that we can act with "infallibly favourable chances". It is only intended to guide praxis. World history must be *made* by human beings. It is not inevitable or automatic and prediction would be quite problematic.

Moreover, Marx also holds that laws are only tendencies which always meet counteracting influences and that laws in actuality only approximate their pure form.[75] The laws of a social epoch first arise as tendencies hindered by relations belonging to the stage of production being superseded. Laws only assert themselves fully, approximate their purest form, as the superseding forces and relations of production gain strength, reinforce each other, and come to predominate. When established forces and relations of production begin to contradict each other, new laws begin to appear as tendencies. Marx' dialectical method, as we have outlined it, obviously requires that he study laws in the middle period of their development where laws approximate their purest and highest form. For this reason Marx studied the England of his day. An understanding of the laws holding there would also give him the key to the earlier period of their historical rise and development, as well as to the development of other nations (like Germany) entering that earlier period (insofar as similar conditions obtained there).[76]

Laws are always tendencies which always meet counteracting forces (more so in the earlier and later periods but also in the middle period). Counteracting forces may retard and impede or assist and hasten the tendency of a law. There is no good reason to understand the phrase "tendencies working with iron necessity toward inevitable results" as a metaphysical sort of necessity.[77] However, this phrase does mean that in the middle period where laws approximate their purest form as in England (which is what Marx is discussing here), these laws will necessarily tend to realize their results.

Will this allow us to predict? It may seem that Marx himself at times makes predictions. For example, in the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy*, he says: "At a certain stage of development, the material productive forces of society come into conflict with the existing relations of production . . . From forms of development of the productive forces these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an era of social revolution. The changes in the economic foundation lead sooner or later to transformation of the whole superstructure." Nevertheless, Marx only puts this forward as part of a summary of what he calls the "guiding principle" of his studies. It is not a scientific prediction. It is a guiding principle. Moreover, he goes on to suggest, as we have seen, that ideas cannot be determined with scientific precision.[78] Obviously then ideas could not be predicted. But what about material conditions?

In some contemporary philosophy of science, prediction is understood as a form of deduction. One premiss asserts a general law (or laws) and the other asserts a set of empirical conditions. If the law is true and the conditions obtain, one can deduce and thus predict that a certain event will necessarily occur. If the predicted event fails to occur, then one can conclude either that the relevant conditions did not obtain or that the law is false. If it is possible to ascertain that the relevant conditions did obtain, then, if the event did not occur, it is clear that the law is false.[79]

This method of testing a law will not work for Marx, not simply because relevant conditions are complex, changing, and hold unevenly throughout society, but because social laws themselves, as Marx understands them, do not hold simply, eternally, and evenly as they may in nature. They are tendencies undergoing a process of development. Thus prediction would be most difficult[80] because in social science we cannot isolate the conditions that produce, retard, or transform these laws adequately enough to enable us to be precise about the level which the tendency of the law has reached.

If a predicted event fails to occur it would be most difficult to decide, given the complexity of social conditions and the difficulty in isolating the relevant ones, whether the proper conditions and no others were present and thus that the law is false, or whether the relevant conditions did not properly obtain so that an actually existing, fully developed law could manifest itself, or whether the law itself had not yet become powerful enough to act effectively (or was already declining) because of the level to which the forces and relations of production had developed. Such problems are not as prevalent in some natural sciences because experiments can be performed, because conditions are more easily isolated, and because laws are relatively

unchanging.

Social processes are not like natural processes. Once we understand, say, the laws which regulate the movement of the planets, we can, barring freak circumstances, predict their movements with great accuracy. In fact, given the values of the relevant variables at any one time we can, in theory at least, predict all future states of the system. This, however, would not be possible in all natural sciences. For example, it is generally held that the Darwinian theory of biological evolution would not be able to predict in this way. This is so because biological systems are not sufficiently closed. They are influenced by too many variables which cannot be determined accurately.[81]

This, as we have seen, is also the case in social science. Moreover, the laws which regulate social processes are themselves the outcome of interactions between human beings in society, and laws are affected by these interactions. There is a dialectical relationship between laws and society. It is true that these laws will determine how individuals act, but their action will then transform these laws. Moreover, this interaction is determined by specific conditions and is dependent upon accidents. Accurate prediction is not possible here. Rather, we must move to a different model. We must continuously study existing society. We must try to discover its laws and to pinpoint the level which their tendency has reached - not to predict but so that we can begin to act to realize goals which are compatible with these conditions and laws. So, acting changes the situation and then we must engage in further study, discovery, and action, etc., etc. There is a certain amount of regularity and consistency here. The existing laws do determine our actions and perhaps some short-term predictions are possible. But if the laws themselves undergo change, then long-term prediction - the prediction of socialist society - becomes highly problematic. This is especially the case since Marx holds that from the categories which allow us to understand one period we cannot derive the categories necessary to understand the following period. The main point here is that we are engaged in a practical matter of using science to realize goals, not a theoretical matter of making predictions. We can *make* history, not predict it.[82]

The question that arises here is whether Marx himself was clearly aware that his method would not allow him to predict. I cannot cite clear evidence that he was. We might notice, however, that he did, at least in 1843, make it quite clear that his goal was not to predict. He wrote:

> It is precisely the advantage of the new trend that we do not dogmatically anticipate the world, but only want to find the new

> world through criticism of the old one. Hitherto philosophers have had the solution of all riddles lying in their writing desks, and the stupid, exoteric world had only to open its mouth for the roast pigeons of absolute knowledge to fly into it . . . But, if constructing the future and settling everything for all times are not our affair, it is all the more clear what we have to accomplish at present: I am referring to the ruthless criticism of all that exists . . .

What about in the later writings? When Marx tells us that the categories of one period will neither promote nor explain those of the next period, this so clearly rules out prediction that it would seem hard to believe that Marx was not aware of it.[83] His method begins with an analysis of existing society and seeks to discover the categories which describe this society. It clearly follows that as society is transformed these categories and their interconnection will no longer describe that society. New categories will have to be worked up to do so. If existing categories will neither promote nor explain future categories, they can hardly be used to predict.

V. DIALECTICAL METHOD AND EPISTEMOLOGY

Contrary to the reading of some scholars, Marx' epistemology is not a social subjectivism and nature is not merely a social category. Marx wants to assert a clear distinction between nature in-itself (unlabored upon nature) and nature socially transformed by human labor, and contrary to the tendencies of his own earlier writings (in the *German Ideology* he admitted only to a "few Australian coral islands of recent origin") he wants to hold that there is a considerable amount of untransformed nature around at present. To cite just two of many passages: in *Capital*, Marx says: "just as in the beginning, the only participators in the labour process were man and the earth, which latter exists independently of man, so even now we still employ in the process many means of production provided directly by Nature, that do not represent any combination of natural substances with human labour", and later he mentions substances "supplied by Nature without human assistance, such as land, wind, water, metals in situ, and virgin forests".[84]

Unlabored upon nature, not in any way a result of production, was an original precondition for the first rise of production; as production develops and begins to transform nature, nature begins to appear as the result of production.[85]

Marx' position is not a monism in which labor alone transforms the

animal into a human being. Marx does accept that the human being developed from the ape and that the human being is a part of nature; but, contrary to Engels, the distinction between human beings and animals is a natural one, not one posited by the human being or labor.[86] The natural origin of the human being is the proper study of biology. Marx refers to Darwin's accomplishments in this area and admits that biological development, unlike social history, is not made by human beings.[87]

Given the existence of human beings, productive activity then begins significantly to transform and sharpen original natural differences between human beings and animals. Marx says of developed human beings: "What distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement." Just as production transforms our natural needs into historically created ones, so we can say that human consciousness is both a natural presupposition of and a historical result of social development.[88]

If nature and the human being are historically transformed by human productive activity, the question arises whether we can know untransformed nature. Schmidt and Jordan, for example, think it impossible. It is quite clear that Marx, however, thinks we can know untransformed nature both as it presently exists and as it existed before human beings did.[89] To understand it, however, we must have the proper categories. Categories only achieve their fullest complexity and abstraction where they cease to be linked with particular and specific activities. They only achieve this fullest development with the fullest development of the concrete which they express. These categories then become the key to understanding the earlier development of the thing:

> The categories which express [bourgeois society's] relations, the comprehension of its structure, thereby also allows insights into the structure and relations of production of all the vanished social formations out of whose ruins and elements it built itself up, whose partly still unconquered remnants are carried along within it, whose mere nuances have developed explicit significance within it, etc. Human anatomy contains the key to the anatomy of the ape.

We can see intimations of higher development in earlier stages once we know the higher development. We can see how remnants of the earlier development are carried along and contained in the category, though often in a transformed and twisted way. The past can be understood by

discovering what elements of the fully developed category were present, missing, transformed, etc., in the earlier form.[90] In this way, for example, tools allow us to understand extinct forms of society as fossils allow us to understand extinct species.[91]

We must also examine Marx' views on perception and its relation to knowledge. First, it is quite clear that Marx rejects a subjectivism of the empiricist variety. In *Capital* he says: "Light from an object is perceived by us not as the subjective excitation of our optic nerve, but as the objective form of something outside the eye itself." How then are we to understand this outside object? Is it an object constituted by us (through a constitution involving our own praxis or perception), or is it an independent object not constituted by us? Marx definitely holds that we can have and know the latter sort of object. We can discover unchanging laws of nature, e.g., concerning plants and animals, as long as human beings have not interfered with them. If human beings have interfered, if human beings have actually, practically, changed them, Marx seems to imply, then their laws and our knowledge will be changed.[92]

Praxis does transform the object and the laws of its development. Does this mean that all praxis, even the scientific process of experiment and discovery, transforms the object, its laws, and thus what we can know? Marx does not explicitly claim that this is the case and he seems to hold in one passage that in fact it is not the case: "The circumstance, however, that retorts and other vessels, are necessary to a chemical process, does not compel the chemist to notice them in the result of his analysis."[93] This seems to allow that the scientist discovers the characteristics of the object itself rather than a for-us influenced by the process of discovery. This would certainly have to be the case if to discover the unchanging laws of plants and animals it is necessary that we do not influence them.

Moreover, while industrial praxis certainly transforms and constitutes nature (e.g., genetically produced grains, domesticated animals, etc.)[94] as well as the socio-economic order, praxis clearly does not play a constitutive role in the methodological elaboration of scientific theory. Theoretical consciousness reproduces a concrete for thought, while "The real subject retains its autonomous existence outside the head just as before."[95] Theoretical construction does not constitute, it reflects or mirrors, the actual.[96] Industrial praxis certainly transforms the actual concrete and the laws operating there, and thus for theory to mirror the actual, the concrete for thought will have to change as the actual concrete does; but other than this, praxis plays no role in

the theoretical working up of the concrete for thought.

However, this mirroring is not to be understood as it was for Engels, where in a very direct way "the dialectics in our heads is only the reflection of the actual development going on in the world of nature and human history".[97] Here as elsewhere, Engels overlooks the role of theoretical reconstruction. For Marx, science reflects by reconstructing and reproducing in thought.

Are there other areas in which perception transforms the object? Marx implies that an artistic or religious appropriation of the object, unlike theoretical appropriation, does transform the object. It is difficult to decide how to take this. Does it mean something very ordinary, e.g., that an artist must chip the marble, or that a religious congregation demands certain behavior of its members, etc.? This would not require us to say that perception constitutes the object. Or does it mean that an artistic or religious outlook actually transforms and constitutes the world in and through the imagination? One might read Marx' discussion of Greek mythology and the Homeric epic in this way. For example, when Marx says, "mythology overcomes and dominates and shapes the forces of nature in the imagination and by the imagination"[98], are we to take him to be saying that the object is an object-for-us which is constituted through a synthesis involving the external thing-itself and subjective factors like artistic imagination (a view like that which Marx did hold in 1844[99])? Despite the fact that there are passages which might seem to imply this position, I do not think that it is Marx' view.

Marx does say that the consuming subject actualizes the product: "A railway on which no trains run, hence which is not used up, not consumed, is a railway only potentially, and not in reality." Marx also says that the subject is the "ideal, internally impelling cause", the "motive", the "aim", of production. Nevertheless, we must recall that it is production which produces the subject's need as well as the quality of that need. Indeed, rather than perception constituting the object, the object produces the quality, the sensitivity, the content of the perception. An art object "creates a public which is sensitive to art and enjoys beauty".[100] However, it is true that if a need is not present in the subject, an object will not be a real product - it will have no use and will be insignificant to the subject.[101] In 1844 Marx was willing to say that it would not be an *object* for the subject. In 1857-8, by distinguishing between *object* and *product*, the thing-itself and its use or use-value, Marx can still say as in 1844 that need and perception are necessary to make something a useful product which can satisfy and develop the subject. But lacking this the thing is still an object. Like

the *German Ideology* the thing is still an object in-itself, as all objects are, whether or not it happens to be a useful or significant product for-us. Objects are transformed and constituted by actually changing them in praxis, not by perception, theoretical knowledge, or experiment.[102]

Insofar as perception does seem to constitute the object - as, for example, when Marx says in his discussion of fetishism that the laws of political economy are taken to be eternal and natural - this is an appearance to be gotten through by science. Further, even this appearance is determined by material conditions, not simply by perception.[103]

In 1844 Marx took objects to be constituted - this constitution involved our perception and consciousness as well as praxis. Here subjective changes could transform the object. In the *German Ideology* the object was taken to be independent of our consciousness or perception. It could be transformed only through praxis and was directly mirrored in consciousness.[104] The *Grundrisse* tries to establish a middle position between the *1844 Manuscripts* and the *German Ideology*. The only objects constructed by consciousness are theoretical objects, though need and perception are necessary to make something a useful or significant product. Actual objects are transformed only through praxis, but the actual object is not directly mirrored in consciousness; it is mirrored only through the construction of a theoretical object.

We can also say that Marx has no need for the concept of an unknown thing-in-itself. Marx rejected this concept in earlier periods of his thought and there is no evidence to suggest that he has changed his mind here.[105]

We have said that Marx rejects a subjectivism of the sort that the empiricists hold. Thus no extra-subjective unknown thing-in-itself emerges in this way. Marx also rejects the German Idealist notion that the real is a product of thought - a thought world which thus from time to time "receives a jolt from the outside". Marx rejects this unknown thing-in-itself or Fichtean impulse just as he had in the *German Ideology*. Further, in a letter of 1858 Engels seems to approve of Dietzgen's rejection of the thing-in-itself as a mere thought-thing and in his answer to Engels Marx seems to agree.[106]

For Marx the reconstructed concrete for thought exactly mirrors the actual concrete. It expresses "the forms of being, the characteristics of existence" of the actual concrete.[107]

Marx argues that it is capitalism which creates the illusion of a split between an appearance for-us and a thing-in-itself. The fetishistic

tendency of capitalism appears to absorb nature totally into social categories. Everything is taken as a "means of production" or "a matter of utility". The natural object ceases to have any legitimacy "for itself outside the circle of production and exchange". Capitalism, Marx says, accomplishes this "ideally" but not of course "really".[108]

Fetishism, for Marx, means that relations between persons come to appear as relations between things. Independent producers put their products onto a market, market laws set in, and they come to dominate these individuals. Relationships between things (the products) appear to be independent, autonomous, and natural. The concept of fetishism for Marx becomes a most important epistemological category. What are really social relations between human beings appear to take on an objective and autonomous thinglike character. In this way Marx tries to explain how something can actually appear to be the case for a social epoch, appear natural to that epoch (even be necessary for higher social developments), yet lack any deeper ontological base.[109] We will discuss this matter further in the following section.

VI. DIALECTICAL METHOD AND A NEW CONCEPT OF ESSENCE

To complete our explanation of the role of Marx' method in his theory of knowledge, we must define more exactly the relationship between the concrete for thought and the actual concrete, and we must come to see that this relationship involves a concept of essence, though a very different one than in 1844. As we have seen in the Introduction, Althusser, as part of his anti-humanism, argues a radical anti-empiricism here, i.e., that the concrete for thought, the theoretical object, is not only something different from the actual concrete, which is quite obvious, but also, which is not at all obvious, that our knowing the concrete for thought is not a knowing of the actual concrete. For example, Althusser argues that the development of the three volumes of *Capital* is not, as Marx claims it is, a movement from abstract categories to the empirical concrete, from inner essence to surface phenomenon. Indeed, Althusser rejects the distinction between essence and phenomenon altogether. Althusser focuses on those passages of *Capital* where Marx tells us that he studies capitalism as a general abstract type - the concept of capital free from all disturbing influences and obfuscating irrelevancies which are always present in the real world. Althusser concludes that even in the third volume Marx is still dealing with a purely theoretical object. The entire movement from value to prices remains at the theoretical level and never reaches the

actual and empirical.

To say that theoretical knowledge is knowledge of the actual concrete, Althusser thinks, is either, with Hegel, to say that thought produces the object, the real concrete - which thus reduces the real to thought - or it is to reduce, with the empiricists, thought about the real to the real itself.[110] I agree that Marx rejects both of these positions: thought and the actual concrete are distinct. Nevertheless, Marx does take the theoretical object, the concrete for thought, not to *be*, but to be *knowledge of*, the actual concrete. Marx insists that categories grasp real relations, real being and existence. They "express the forms of being, the characteristics of existence". He also says: "the life of the subject matter is ideally reflected as in a mirror".[111]

We must understand the sort of reality which categories and abstractions have for Marx, which indeed is rather difficult to get at. Categories (e.g., value, capital, abstract labor, etc.) are, on the one hand, conceptually grasped social relations, yet on the other hand, these categories themselves have a social existence.[112] In a rather striking passage, Marx says:

> Capital in general, as distinct from the particular capitals, does indeed appear (1) only as an abstraction, not an arbitrary abstraction, but an abstraction which grasps the specific characteristics which distinguish capital from all other forms of wealth . . . ; (2) however, capital in general, as distinct from the particular real capitals, is itself a real existence. This is recognized by ordinary economics, even if it is not understood, and forms a very important moment of its doctrine of equilibrations etc. For example, capital in this general form . . . forms the capital which accumulates in the banks or is distributed through them . . . Likewise, through loans, etc., it forms a level between different countries . . . This double positing, this relating to self as to an alien, becomes damn real in this case. While the general is therefore on the one hand only a mental mark of distinction, it is at the same time a particular real form alongside the form of the particular and individual.[113]

Marx similarly tells us that abstract labor is not merely a concept existing in thought, it is also a social reality existing in a system of production where specific forms of labor have become insignificant. Historical development, as we have seen, is toward more complex social relations as integrated elements of an organized whole; they can be grasped only as abstractions, as relations which have lost all

particular and personal characteristics. Categories thus are "given, in the head as well as in reality".[114]

Categories are clearly not to be taken as merely non-empirical logical-mental realities, let alone as purely hypothetical fictions.[115] They have a social existence. The problem then is not so much to understand the concrete for thought as it is to understand the actual concrete and how abstractions exist in this concrete.

Are categories to be taken as metaphysical essences? In 1844 Marx held that the development of reality toward abstraction was a realization of its essence in existence.[116]

In the *German Ideology* Marx abandoned the metaphysical concept of essence which permeated his thought in 1844.[117] But in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* Marx again frequently employs a concept of essence. He even says that "all science would be superfluous if the outward appearance and the essence of things directly coincided". Indeed, for Marx the whole inner essential law of value contradicts the external phenomenon of prices and profit.[118] Marx continuously tells us that there is an important difference between the deeper inner essence and the phenomenal surface.[119] The latter is experienced, the former grasped in abstract thought.

We have said that the method of the *Grundrisse* begins with abstract categories gotten through analysis. It discovers their interconnection in modern society and constructs a concrete for thought which allows scientific understanding to replace the vague and chaotic experience given at the start. The method, in other words, seeks the inner reality beneath the surface exterior, the essence behind the phenomenon. Categories which have social existence have this existence, obviously, at the level of essence not at the level of phenomenon.

But just as the method employed in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* is different from the method of 1844 so the two concepts of essence are different. The method of the *1844 Manuscripts* was to derive all existence from an essence. Marx claimed that estranged labor was the essence and the cause not only of private property but of all the categories of political economy.[120]

In *Capital* it is abstract labor which allows us to understand value and surplus value and these are key to a correct understanding of profit and prices. Are value and abstract labor the essence behind the appearance in the 1844 sense? Are essences metaphysical realities which generate the actual concrete and its surface phenomena? Marx is perfectly clear. Discovering the interconnection of the categories and reconstructing the concrete for thought is a method, the way our mind

works in studying the subject. It has nothing whatsoever to do with the actual generation of the actual concrete. The material conditions of the actual concrete structure social relations and give rise to the abstract categories of labor, value, etc. It is only the method that begins with value and abstract labor in order to work back to the concrete, to reconstruct the concrete for thought - precisely the reverse of the actual generation.[121]

What then are we to say of essences? Marx claims that "When we speak of the commodity as a materialization of labour - in the sense of its exchange value - this itself is only an imaginary, that is to say, a purely social mode of existence of the commodity which has nothing to do with its corporeal reality."[122] Thus essences too could only have an imaginary or social mode of existence.

Essences are reflections of the actual concrete. They arise out of social processes, reflect those processes, and disappear with the disappearance of those processes. Categories and their interconnections are, on the one hand, the essence behind surface phenomena (a scientifically coherent concrete for thought that organizes otherwise chaotic experience) and, on the other hand, essences are reflections of the real social processes of the actual concrete. Thus while employing the concept of essence in ways similar to the *1844 Manuscripts*, Marx rejects the metaphysical reality of essences as he did in the *German Ideology*. He rejects their metaphysical reality but not their metaphysical appearance. Capitalist social processes do give rise to fetishized categories "abounding in metaphysical subtleties". [123]

If the structure of categories, the essence, is not a metaphysical reality, but a reflection, how then are we to understand the actual concrete? In grasping the structure of categories, do we grasp merely a reality for-us, an appearance constituted by social categories? Not at all. The actual concrete, not the subject, gives rise to the real social processes which these categories express.

Moreover, essences which reflect the actual concrete certainly do not appear on the surface of society. Profit and prices appear; surplus value and value do not. They are only disclosed by the scientifically correct method.

Still, it might be argued that science only grasps a different sort of appearance in the sense that as science goes below the surface of society it nevertheless discloses merely a reality for-us. If we reject, as we already have, the notion that science fails to grasp the actual concrete in-itself (i.e., if we reject the existence of an unknown thing-in-itself), then it would seem that we must claim that the actual concrete in-itself is nothing but, i.e., is to be identified with, the reflections produced (i.e., identical with the categories and their interconnections, the essence) -

which seems to reduce the real to thought. This is the view we must avoid. We must insist upon the distinction between thought and the actual concrete, but without turning the real into an unknown thing-in-itself.

To know the actual concrete we must take into account the totality of reflections (categories and their interconnection, the essence) to which the actual concrete (the totality of real processes) at its stage of development gives rise. To grasp the categories and their interconnection is, while keeping thought and the actual concrete distinct, to know reality as it exists and is given. There is no further, more real, underlying reality to be found behind the reflection which differs from the one described by the interconnection of categories. Reality is nothing other than what is described by a scientifically coherent organization of experience. Thus we know reality, not mere appearance. Yet in knowing reality as it is actually reflected we can still, in an important sense, say that we know mere appearance because in knowing this reflection we see through it critically. We recognize its fetishistic character. We recognize that at earlier periods of development the reflections produced were quite different from the present ones and we begin to see what the actual concrete could become (which it is not yet) if it were changed through praxis. In other words, the natural and eternal appearance which reality possesses is mere appearance, which nevertheless is precisely the appearance actually and unavoidably belonging to reality as it exists:

> The categories of bourgeois economy consist of such like forms. They are forms of thought expressing with social validity the conditions and relations of a definite, historically determined mode of production, viz., the production of commodities. The whole mystery of commodities, all the magic and necromancy that surrounds the products of labour as long as they take the form of commodities, vanishes therefore, as soon as we come to other forms of production.[124]

In order to get clearer about Marx' notion of the relation of appearance to reality we might notice that beginning with Kant objects cannot be separated from categories. The object itself is a synthetic construction involving both categories of the understanding and a thing-in-itself, which thing, as it is in-itself, remains unknown. The object then is a constructed phenomenal appearance. Here there is no difficulty in seeing that the appearance of the object is inseparable from the categories. Hegel, on the other hand, denies that the thing-in-itself is an unknown entity outside consciousness. It follows then that if

consciousness constitutes our experience, it cannot constitute mere appearance cut off from a thing-in-itself which remains unknown - it must then constitute reality. Consciousness constitutes the thing-in-itself as well as appearance, and the thing-in-itself, for Hegel, is revealed through its appearance. Marx is operating within this tradition but going beyond it. He holds: (1) like Kant and Hegel that reflections cannot be separated from the categories, (2) but that categories do not construct Kantian appearance or Hegelian reality, and (3) as for Kant and unlike Hegel that the thing-in-itself exists independently and is not constituted by consciousness, but as for Hegel and unlike Kant that the thing-in-itself is known through its reflection.

For Marx, reality is developed to its given level through praxis. Because it is fetishized, reality itself comes to have the abstract shape which is grasped by the categories. It is true that consciousness forms the categories as well as the structure of categories and it is true that the categories do in a sense modify experience, but they do not construct appearance in the Kantian sense. Appearances are not Kantian appearances cut off from a thing-in-itself which remains unknown. The categories organize experience by turning disorganized and obscure experience into an orderly scientific structure, but they do not construct the object or reality; they reflect an independently existing, real object.

It may seem odd to refer to both surface phenomena and essences as forms of appearance, but I think this can be defended. There are two ways to understand the concept of appearance. For Galileo and Locke, appearances differ from, even contradict, the reality behind them. The apparent motion of the heavenly bodies differs from their real motion just as the secondary qualities which appear to us differ from primary qualities as they exist in the object. Even for Kant, appearances differ from the thing-in-itself. This is the concept of appearance that Marx employs when discussing surface phenomena. Surface phenomena differ from, even contradict, concrete reality.

On the other hand, in Hegel we find another concept of appearance. Here appearance is the appearance of the thing-in-itself or the Idea. Appearance does not differ from reality; it is the appearance of reality. There is nothing behind the appearance which differs from the appearance.[125] The Idea manifests itself in reality by appearing. When Marx discusses essence, he employs a concept of appearance or reflection much like this one. The essence, for Marx, is the appearance or reflection of concrete reality. If this were not the case then we would fall back to Althusser's position. The essence, the structure of categories, would not actually grasp concrete reality.

Thus, while scientifically ordered experience, the essence, the structure of categories, reveals the thing-in-itself, concrete reality, as for

Hegel, nevertheless consciousness does not construct or posit this thing-in-itself nor does it mold reality. The "social mode of existence" of a thing, for Marx, is to be understood as an appearance or reflection. This reflection is to be distinguished from the actual concrete, yet it is the reflection of that concrete. Thus, when Marx says that categories have a social existence he is saying that social existence or appearance is inseparable from categories and their structural interconnection because the latter are necessary to turn obscure experience into a clear scientific reflection such that this reflection is the reflection of reality, the way reality actually appears to science when it appears clearly at its specific level of development. The accurate reflection of reality, its social mode of existence, is not possible without the categories; the two are inseparable, but categories are not being identified with, they are distinct from, concrete reality.

Marx' epistemology is not a naive realism where independent categories simply reflect an independent reality; it is not a social subjectivism which constructs a mere for-us cut off from an unknown thing-in-itself; and it is not an anti-empiricism which grasps mere structures rather than actual reality. There is a definite conceptualist element present, but actual independent reality is reflected through the construction of categories and their interconnection.

Let us be more precise. We are concerned with three levels or dimensions of things: (1) reality itself or the actual concrete, (2) the essence or the scientific organization of categories, and (3) surface phenomena, the unorganized confusion of everyday experience. Both surface phenomena and essences are appearances, but in quite different ways. Surface phenomena are obscure appearances which can contradict the actual concrete. The essence, which is an accurate appearance or reflection of actual concrete reality, must then also differ from surface phenomena. This is what Marx means when he says that science would be superfluous if essence always coincided with appearance. He could just as well have said that science would be superfluous if reality always coincided with surface phenomena.

On the other hand, the essence does not contradict the actual concrete - it reflects it. However, as reality develops and changes, the essence, the structure of categories, which has a "social mode of existence", will no longer reflect reality - a new structure will have to be developed to do so.

We must also notice that all three levels - the actual concrete, essences, and phenomena - are in a sense real. Essences and phenomena are not simply illusions which the method can ignore or brush aside. They are necessary appearances of given reality which must be taken into consideration at different stages of the method-

ological procedure. Essences, we have said, are social realities. But they are not real in the sense that they have an independent existence of their own. They do not themselves produce surface phenomena or generate the actual concrete. They are not metaphysical realities. Essences are accurate scientific descriptions of the actual concrete. They are descriptions of the social relations, structures, or processes which link the concrete to its surface phenomena, and they are descriptions of the structures by which the concrete generates and transforms surface phenomena. The actual concrete causes surface phenomena; essences grasp and describe how it does so. Essences are real in the sense that they describe real processes as long as those processes continue to exist. Essences are appearances to scientific thought of those processes. Essences are the social mode of existence of the concrete. They are not independent metaphysical entities apart from the concrete or its processes.

The distinction between essence and phenomenon is not metaphysical any more than the difference between the real and the apparent movement of celestial bodies is.[126] There are not two ontological levels to reality. There is only one. The real movement gives rise to certain phenomenal appearances - necessary appearances given our position in relation to the celestial body or given our fetishized social relations. We begin with the phenomenon and work through a complex form of analysis and reconstruction to the real movement. We realize along the way that the real movement would give rise to very different appearances if the real movement were changed, if we occupied a different position in the solar system, or if we transformed our social relations and processes. In the latter case real movement and phenomenal appearance could come to coincide.

In order to understand the real movement of the actual concrete, Marx' method employs the concept of an essence. The essence has no independent existence of its own but describes the actual concrete and links the actual with the phenomenal. It is a concept that can be abandoned if the actual concrete, having been transformed through praxis, comes to coincide with phenomenal appearance. With fetishism overcome, relations to nature and to other persons, Marx says, will become "clear", "transparent", "undisguised", "perfectly simple and intelligible".[127] Because of this, these relations will be more easily understood and more easily controlled for the mutual benefit of the persons involved and a humanized society could be achieved.

In *Capital*, Marx cites several examples of non-fetishized circumstances in which socio-economic relations appear as clear, intelligible, directly experienced relations between human beings and their objects and between human beings themselves who consciously

organize and control their interactions in specific ways. Here real social relations coincide with their phenomenal appearances. Abstract labor and exchange value disappear.[128] Marx discusses precapitalist economic examples as well as the example of a socialist society. Fetishism is absent either because there is no exchange or because exchange and all social relations are consciously controlled. Control is key here.[129] Socio-economic relations cease to be simple and intelligible in fetishized exchange economies because exchange is uncontrolled. Instead, abstract independent laws of the market set in and come to control the interaction between human beings. The laws which regulate exchange of products appear as and are independent of the action, will, or consciousness of any individual. What are particular relations between persons appear instead as abstract relations between things (their products). Social relations can thus appear eternal and natural. Social reality seems to be and is abstract, i.e., independent of, not controlled by, and not understandable as, particular human and personal relations. To begin to understand such relations we must go behind surface experience.[130]

Because of fetishism, social reality actually becomes abstract such that it can be grasped only by abstract categories. Abstractness exists not merely for thought but in reality itself. This is what Marx means when he says that abstract categories have a social existence.

In 1844 all reality was taken to be the objectification of an essence. In the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* this is not the case - phenomenal appearance differs from reality, so that essences are necessary to connect them, only when fetishism or alienation is present.

The view of 1844 was that the manifestation of the essence might or might not be alienated. If not alienated, then the essence would manifest itself to the senses. Phenomena would actually appear as the outcome and realization of the human essence. If, on the other hand, alienation was present, then the essence remained hidden and phenomena seemed independent and intelligible on their own so that it did not seem necessary to trace them from an essence.[131] The important difference then is that when alienation or fetishism is overcome, then phenomena, in 1844, appear clearly as the realization of an essence, whereas, in *Capital* and the *Grundrisse*, essences disappear. Yet despite this difference, in both periods unalienated intelligible reality is taken to be reality which is the outcome of human activity and interaction which is consciously controlled and purposively directed. In 1844 such activity was understood as the realization of a metaphysical essence; in *Capital* and the *Grundrisse* this notion is absent and even the appearance of essence evaporates when alienation or fetishism is overcome.

VII. DIALECTICAL METHOD AND THE LATER WRITINGS

So far we have confined our discussion mainly to the *Grundrisse*, the *Critique of Political Economy*, and *Capital*. Thus, the question arises whether Marx' dialectical method remains the same in later writings.

After the *Grundrisse*, we never again find in Marx' writings as detailed and direct a discussion of method. And, of course, after *Capital*, we never find as extensive an employment of this method. However, in the 'Notes on Adolph Wagner' of 1879-80, Marx again has some things to say about his method, though in this text he confines himself to a discussion of how he had actually employed his method in *Capital* and how Wagner has misunderstood it. Nevertheless, we do not find that Marx' conception of method here differs in any significant way from the way it was outlined in the *Grundrisse*.

In the first place, Marx tells us again that the correct procedure is to begin with concepts or categories common to all forms of society and to seek to distinguish their specific and determinate form in modern bourgeois society: "the 'value' of a commodity only expresses in a historically developed form, what exists in all other forms of society as well . . . If 'the value' of the commodity is only a determinate historical form of something which exists in all forms of society, then so is the social use-value . . . "[132]

Moreover, Marx makes it clear that these categories only reach their full development late in history. He says that exchange value "only arises where at least some part of the labour-products, the objects of use, function as 'commodities' - however, this does not happen at the beginning, but only in a certain period of social development, hence at a determinate level of historical development . . . "[133]

What is more, Marx tells us explicitly - as I argued earlier - that Volume I of *Capital* does not start with a discussion of commodities in capitalist society but with a discussion of the concept of 'commodity' in general - with commodities as they appear in all societies in which they appear. He says that in *Capital*, "the definitions of 'capital' are not connected straight away with the analysis of the commodity, nor even with the discussion of its 'use-value', since it would have to be pure nonsense, so long as we are only at the stage of analyzing the elements of the commodity."[134]

Marx also describes how he begins to analyze these concepts:

> What I start out from is the simplest social form in which the labour-product is presented in contemporary society, and this is the 'commodity'. I analyze it, and right from the beginning, in the form in which it appears. Here I find that it is, on the one hand, in

> its natural form, a useful thing, alias, a use-value; on the other hand, it is a bearer of exchange-value and from this view, it is itself 'exchange-value'. Further analysis of the latter shows me that exchange-value is only a 'form of appearance', the autonomous mode of presentation of the value contained in the commodity, and then I move on to the analysis of the latter.[135]

Here, we notice a slight difference from the *Grundrisse*. Instead of beginning with a group of categories and seeking to connect them into an integrated structure, Marx simply begins with the commodity and derives the other categories from it by analysis. He will then integrate them into a connected structure. This procedure, it seems to me, only produces greater elegance and simplicity.

We also notice in this passage and in others, that Marx continues to operate with the distinction between essence and appearance.[136] Moreover, five years earlier, in the 'Critique of the Gotha Program', Marx also held that value as an essence will disappear in socialist society: "Within the co-operative society based on common ownership of the means of production, the producers do not exchange their products; just as little does the labour employed on the products appear as the value of these products, as a material quality possessed by them ..."[137]

However, it might be argued that there is one fundamental shift in the 'Notes on Wagner'. Marx tells us that in *Capital*, he did "not start out from 'concepts' . . . What I start out from is the simplest social form in which the labour-product is presented in contemporary society, and this is the 'commodity' ". He also says that the commodity is a "concretum", "the simplest economic concretum".[138] Sayer makes a great deal out of these passages in arguing that *Capital* does not begin with abstract transhistorical categories but with an empirical and historical particular.[139] I do not think that Sayer is correct here. In the Preface to the 'Notes on Wagner', Carver says, and correctly, I think: "But when Marx investigated and discussed the commodity as a 'social form', he was nonetheless dealing with a concept (albeit the concept of a concrete social thing). The point of his distinction between starting from 'concepts' and starting from a 'social form' . . . was, I think, that Wagner and others had attempted to define and relate economic categories in some nebulous, arbitrary way."[140] In denying that he starts with concepts, Marx is saying that the commodity is not to be understood as a concept in Wagner's sense of 'concept'; nevertheless, it is a concept in Marx' sense.

Moreover, as I argued earlier, and as we have just seen in a quotation from the 'Notes on Wagner', Marx himself admits that

Capital does not begin with an analysis of capitalist commodities, but with commodities common to many different forms of society. This obviously means that he is starting with the abstract concept of a commodity.

Furthermore, when Marx calls the commodity a 'concretum', we must recall what Marx means by the concrete. The concrete is the concentration of many determinations and relations.[141] In the *Grundrisse*, the concrete was grasped in thought by bringing together in an integrated structure all the relevant categories of bourgeois society. It is true that there the concrete meant the living whole of capitalist society. The commodity differs from this only in that it is a "cell form"[142], a concrete in miniature. In fact, we have seen this in a passage from the 'Notes on Wagner' already quoted above; we have seen that the commodity is the concentration of many abstractions such that by analyzing it one can derive from it the concepts of use value, exchange value, and so forth.[143]

Moreover, as we have seen earlier in this chapter, abstract categories, for Marx, have a social existence. Marx said in the *Grundrisse* that capital in general appears "as an abstraction". Nevertheless, "while the general is therefore on the one hand only a mental mark of distinction, it is at the same time a particular real form alongside the form of the particular and individual."[144] In the same way abstract labor is not just a concept which exists in our minds, but a real phenomenon existing in the social world. This, I think, is what Marx means in the 'Notes on Wagner', when he calls the commodity a "social form" and a "concretum", and this is not a shift from his views in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital.*

VIII. WITHERING AWAY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

If the actual and the phenomenal coincide, "all science", Marx has said, "would become superfluous". If fetishism is overcome, then, as we saw at the end of Section VI, essences would disappear - thus the actual and the phenomenal would coincide - and all relations would become "clear", "transparent", "perfectly simple and intelligible". Are we then to admit that Marx' science, the dialectical method we have been describing, would become superfluous in an unfetishized and humanized Communist society?[145] This is the issue we must discuss in this section.

Marx argues in the 'Afterword' to the second German edition of *Capital* that political economy ceases to be a science as soon as class

struggle develops. At that point capitalism can no longer be seriously considered as an eternal, natural, and objective form of production and its laws can no longer be taken as natural laws. There would only be room for a critique of political economy (which after all is the subtitle of *Capital*), i.e., a method designed to get behind the fetishized appearance of capitalist relations as eternal and natural.[146] But with the end of capitalism and fetishism even a critique of political economy would become redundant. Science, at least theoretical science, would be necessary no longer in the socio-economic realm. Instead, Marx seems to suggest that science would turn to practical objectives - to purposeful control of production and the individual's development.[147]

We find an extended and partially sympathetic discussion of the withering away of social science in Cohen's *Karl Marx's Theory of History*.[148] Cohen, however, argues that to speak of a gulf between appearance and reality, as Marx does, implies an unacceptable distinction between observation and theory. It should be clear by now that for Marx we cannot grasp reality without theory. Cohen's point is that strictly speaking we cannot even grasp everyday phenomena without it. There is no theory-free observation; all experience is theory-laden. Cohen thinks that this is definitely not Marx' view. Marx naively opposes theory to simple, direct, theory-free observation in a way which is incompatible with contemporary philosophy of science. This is a complex matter. Marx did hold in the *German Ideology* that theory-free observation was possible.[149] But I do not think, despite possible exceptions to the contrary, that we can say in any simple way that this is Marx' considered view in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*.

We must notice that to accept the claim that all observation is theory-laden does not imply that we must hold that all observation is shaped by theories which are properly scientific. Non-scientific assumptions which arise out of praxis or social interaction, ruling ideas, the elaboration of ideas by ideologists, mythology and imagination, all of these, can shape experience and observation. For example, Marx says: "All mythology overcomes and dominates and shapes the forces of nature in the imagination and by the imagination . . . "[150] Moreover, as we saw in Section V of this chapter, such non-scientific factors, while they do not construct the object, are necessary for a product to have significance or use value.

The shaping of everyday experience by such factors, however, is quite different from the scientific construction of the concrete for thought. The latter, Marx thinks, can reflect reality accurately, and for it to do so requires an elaborate process of theoretical analysis and

reconstruction. Scientific theory proper is necessary to reflect reality accurately but it is not necessary to shape everyday experience. Unreflective common-sensical assumptions, mythology, or non-scientific ideas generated by material conditions will do so, but of course will not give us an accurate reflection of reality. Thus all experience is theory-laden but all theory is not accurate and scientific.

However, there is a further issue here. Is Marx holding that there is an independent, privileged, theory-free form of observation which allows us to check and guarantee the fit between scientific theory and reality? Nothing like this is suggested in his discussion of method and such an assumption would violate what he did say about his method. But how then can he claim, let alone know, that theory grasps reality? It is clear that he cannot know this independently of the theory; we can only know through the theory. This much, I think, is clear from the texts as they have been discussed above and I do not think that Marx can establish any further or special guarantees here. It may well be the case that Cohen is simply right when he suggests that such issues just did not occur to Marx. But if we push Marx a bit, perhaps we can find a sense in which, though he cannot solve this problem, he might be able to dismiss it. What follows is speculation.

We must notice that Marx' science does not simply seek to grasp reality or the gap and hidden connections between reality and phenomena. The goal of science is also to begin to make possible the transformation of reality through praxis so that theoretical science itself would no longer be necessary. If this project were successful, at least at the point at which it was successful, the problem of the relation of theory to reality beyond what is given by the theory itself would no longer arise as an issue.

Is this a legitimate way to dissolve the problem or is it merely to brush it aside? If theoretical science and theoretical entities had disappeared, could we even then guarantee that phenomena actually did coincide with reality without some form of independent, theory-free observation? I suggest, and this is speculation, that Marx thinks that if in a socialist society human beings were in control of their social relations and relations to nature, then the lack of any special knowledge which went beyond the experience involved in controlling such relations would simply not be of practical importance, and that if in this society we were able to see that theoretical science had helped to make possible the praxis that brought about the transition to such a humanistically controlled society, then we would also see that the lack of any special knowledge concerning the fit between theory and reality would after all not be an issue either.

I cannot demonstrate that this is actually Marx' view but I can point

to things which hint at it. Epicurus, whom Marx in his *Dissertation* (1841) called the "greatest representative of Greek Enlightenment", took ethics to be higher than theoretical science. Any theory which did not clash with natural phenomena and which made freedom and *ataraxia* (or peace of mind) possible was acceptable to Epicurus. To seek the one absolutely true theory was not the goal. Science was a mere means, a means to rid us of determinism and to make the good life possible; science was not an end in itself and not the highest goal.[151]

While Marx is by no means such a relativist (he does think that theory grasps reality), nevertheless his views do, I think, resemble those of Epicurus. Human control, for Marx, is simply the highest concern - one which finally transcends theoretical concerns. Science is necessary to help us to reach a humanized society, but humanized society, not science, is the ultimate goal. Just as for Epicurus, any certitude beyond that experienced in such a society is not possible but, on the other hand, does not seem necessary. (The realization of such a society will not give us in retrospect a special proof of the perfect fit between theory and reality because such a society might be realized even if the fit were not perfect. Furthermore, the theory does not pretend to predict such a society but simply to help make a practical strategy for reaching it possible. If the theory will not predict, it cannot be tested in this way).

In *Capital*, Marx mentions Epicurus and we can hear, without, I think, stretching the passage, an echo of the views which had been discussed in the *Dissertation*. Marx first examines an unfetishized socialist society in control of its exchange relations and then compares it to ancient societies: "Those ancient social organisms of production, are, as compared with bourgeois society, extremely simple and transparent." Both socialist society and some ancient societies are free of fetishism, but Marx also says that fetishized societies, "Trading nations, properly so called, exist in the ancient world only in its interstices, like the gods of Epicurus in the Intermundia . . ."[152] Marx admits that fetishism due to trade actually existed in the ancient world but only in its interstices. Thus it did not disturb things and could be discounted. In a similar way Epicurus banished the gods to the *Intermundia*. Epicurus eliminated the influence of the gods. Such influence would inevitably have meant determinism and thus human peace of mind would have been disturbed. By banishing the gods, the need for a single absolutely true theory to understand their influence was eliminated. No theory was necessary since the gods simply had no influence on human society.

So also in the modern world, for Marx, the task is to use theory to assist praxis in banishing theoretical entities, theoretical social science, the mystical religious reflex of the real world, i.e., fetishism, and to

bring about production consciously regulated in accordance with a social plan by freely associated human beings in a humanized society. Just as Epicurus did not need to seek the one absolutely true theory as long as the gods had been banished and *ataraxia* was possible, so for Marx no special proof of the fit between theory and reality beyond the theory itself and the empirical study it makes possible can be expected, but it is not needed because the solution to practical problems makes such theoretical issues relatively unimportant. The ultimate goal for Marx is not a theoretical one - it is not knowledge of the fit between theory and reality. The ultimate goal is practical - the realization of a humanized society free of fetishism. In the same way, as we saw earlier, the role of theory is not to predict the inevitablility of socialism but to design a strategy which will assist praxis in realizing such a society. The actual realization of a non-fetishized society will not prove the theory, but if one's ultimate goal is a socialist society rather than the proof of theories, this is unimportant much as was the case for Epicurus. Human good and practical concerns are higher ends than scientific or theoretical concerns.

In the *Theses on Feuerbach* Marx argued that the solution to practical problems was the solution to theoretical problems - that practice actually established the truth of theory.[153] This is not Marx' view in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital.* Truth is established through theory and its verification in so far as this is possible. Any further concern with the matter is not a theoretical issue but a matter of higher practical concern. Theory is not an end in itself but a means to help design a strategy for transforming society.

One last problem here. It would seem, from what has been said, that if we admit that everyday experience must be shaped theoretically, then, if the difference between reality and phenomena were to disappear, it would have to be accurate scientific theory not other non-scientific factors which would shape everyday experience. Thus, in this respect, social science could not wither away. We need not hold this. Non-scientific conceptual assumptions would do. It may well be that these non-scientific theoretical assumptions were originally shaped by science, but it would not be the case that scientific analysis or theory would continue to be necessary.

For Marx, we must be careful to notice, it is not science which will cause phenomena to coincide with reality (although scientific understanding would be necessary for us to begin to transform society in this direction), rather phenomena will ultimately accord with reality because reality has actually been transformed through praxis so that theoretical entities like exchange value disappear. Theoretical science presupposes that reality does not coincide with phenomena. With

fetishism overcome, theoretical science will no longer be necessary to mediate or connect phenomena with reality. Furthermore, it is clear that for Marx only theoretical science will wither away. Science as practical control of production, regulation of the economy, and improvement of society, etc., will not wither away.[154] The latter forms of scientific activity would obviously play a role in shaping experience.

I suppose the notion of the withering away of theoretical social science may seem bizarre to some, but even Kuhn argues that in natural science (after a paradigm has been established and normal science begins), if normal science is successful in solving all its problems it simply ceases to function as theoretical science and becomes a tool of engineering.[155]

Moreover, the claim that theoretical social science will wither away is only a claim that the need for a science that must go behind appearance to grasp reality will wither away. The relationship of appearance to reality, however, can be understood in two different ways. First, fetishism might be present and thus reality hidden such that all we see is appearance. Here the gap between appearance and reality can only be bridged by going behind appearance. For Marx, theoretical social science is necessary if we are to grasp an essence behind appearance and are to explain how appearance arises from reality and contradicts it. Here, for practical science to control reality, it would be necessary that theoretical science had already understood reality.

This is quite different from the second model where there is no fetishism and where there is a difference between appearance and reality only in the sense that the observer, being limited and finite, can experience only a small part of reality. For example, an observer may only be familiar with production in one locality, or only with one branch of production, or only one aspect of production. On the basis of such a limited grasp of appearance, we could not say that the observer fully grasps reality, even perhaps the reality the observer is familiar with. Here too there would be a gap between appearance and reality. But it would not be the case that reality contradicts appearance or that to understand reality we must go beneath the surface to grasp an essence which allows us to connect appearance and reality. Here, overcoming the gap between appearance and reality would simply be a matter of gaining more experience or of taking into account the experience of other observers, even if doing so would cause one to revise one's original views. We can even admit that relying on the knowledge of others would be to rely on theoretical knowledge and even that theoretical knowledge would be required to put together all of the data accumulated by limited observers so as to construct a total picture of reality. Moreover, it may well be that such theoretical knowledge

would be necessary to regulate practice in a specific branch of industry. But this would still not be theoretical knowledge which goes beneath surface appearance. It seems to me that this second account of the relation of appearance to reality and of theoretical to practical science is the only one that Marx would accept for socialist society.

It seems to follow from Marx' views on method that, up to the present, categories and their interconnections, as worked up by scientific investigators in any specific historical epoch, allowed us to understand social reality only at a specific and limited level of generality - a higher level of generality than in preceding epochs but a lower level than in succeeding ones (e.g., for the Physiocrats only agricultural labor, for Classical Political Economy labor in general, were grasped as the source of all wealth). Furthermore, the higher development of society and the construction of a more complex categorial structure in each new period allow us to see earlier periods in a new light. It allows us to see the structure grasped by the earlier epoch as a limited, less general, and perhaps distorted case of what finally can be seen in the higher stage. The higher stage, by actually bringing new relations to light, allows us to understand things about earlier epochs that could not be understood there because they existed in undeveloped or distorted form (e.g., Marx claims that Aristotle came close but failed to grasp the concept of value because the existence of abstract equal labor was undeveloped and concealed in Greek society due to the existence of slavery).[156]

To speculate again, it would seem to follow from all of this that contemporary capitalist society, for Marx, would be fully understood only in future socialist society. It would also seem to follow that if social relations finally become clear and intelligible on their own in socialist society, then this society would be the final and definitive historical stage for social science - it would provide the final key to reveal scientifically all earlier social phenomena.

This would not mean that no new social developments would occur after the establishment of socialism. After all, with human beings in control of their social relations there would be increased possibilities for an even wider range of new developments and variations. It would simply mean that these new developments would not be mystified. They could be readily understood without theoretical science - science that must go behind surface experience to seek reality. Such science would wither away. But on the other hand, theoretical science as the study and unraveling of past socio-historical forms, far from withering away, would really begin in socialist society. Each new development in socialist society could well throw new light on the past and, if so, could

even throw light upon the historical generation, out of earlier society, of socialist society itself. Thus, when I say that for Marx theoretical social science will wither away, I mean this in a highly qualified sense.

Furthermore, in so far as categories and their interconnections have reflected the given reality of specific periods to the extent that this reality had emerged and could be understood, and in so far as it was this reality itself which developed to a higher level, there would be an intimate (though very complicated) connection between succeeding scientific systems in the social realm, so that later systems could be key to earlier systems.

One must admit that the conception of socialism as a stage where all social reality becomes clear and intelligible bears a striking resemblance to Hegel's concept of Absolute Knowledge, though, as I have argued, Marx' views lack the idealist and metaphysical dimension found in Hegel. Marx' views instead seem to anticipate similar views found in some modern philosophy of science to the effect that later, more general theories, in replacing earlier ones, explain the earlier ones and, though transforming them, give their insights (though not their specific structure and explanations) a place in the new theory.

Does it necessarily follow from all of this that the new light shed by socialist society on capitalist society would necessarily overthrow the earlier scientific theory designed to describe capitalist society? It is true that I have argued that theory replacement involves a revolutionary transformation of categories and their structure, but this would seem to be the case at least primarily where one is developing a new theory to explain the same reality, as would be the case in natural science and as would be the case with new theories designed to explain societies of the same type, e.g., fetishized societies. Socialism, as Marx understands it, would be a new type of social reality - its relations and processes would no longer be controlled by the same sorts of independent laws which regulated earlier fetishized societies - and no theory at all should be necessary to explain socialist society. Since theory would disappear and the old reality would no longer exist, developments in socialist society could refine but might not overthrow the theory which has grasped reality under capitalism. If this were the case, further support (but not proof) would be given to the claim that the theory did fit reality.

However, it might be the case that developments in socialism would in fact cause us to modify significantly the old theory though not necessarily the method of working up a theory. This would mean that Marx' method would only allow us to generate a theory which grasped capitalist reality in socialist society. On the other hand, new developments in socialist society might, after all, cause us to abandon both the theory and the method. In this case the claim that the method

had generated or could generate a theory that fit reality would have to be given up. But, after all, the method made no claims to an apriori status. If it were the case that the old theory did not accurately grasp reality but neverthless did assist praxis in realizing a humanized socialist society, then Marx would move even closer to Epicurean relativism. It might, of course, turn out that control of the forces and relations of production would not be sufficient to close the gap between phenomena and reality in socialist society.

In speculating on the withering away of social science in this section, I have gone along with Marx' very optimistic views. This is not to say that I naively accept that such a radical transformation of the human condition is possible. It may be, and in many ways it would be desirable. But at times even the truest believer must feel that Marx' views are at least a bit utopian. For example, Marx suggests that when fetishism is overcome, social institutions will no longer be disguised under the shape of relations between products of labor, but will appear as what they really are, mutual relations between individuals. Moreover, in these personal relations the gap between surface phenomena and inner reality will disappear so that these personal relations will be clear, undisguised, transparent, perfectly simple, intelligible, and reasonable.[157] Because of this, these individuals will be able to understand and control their social relations for their own mutual benefit in a humanized society. Thus, in opposition to a paradigm of obscurity - relations between products - Marx sets a paradigm of transparent clarity - mutual relations between individuals. The latter paradigm, it seems to me, is highly questionable, or at least the issue is much more complex than Marx suggests.

The slightest familiarity with modern psychology, for example, would suggest that mutual relations between persons, far from being simple, transparent, easily intelligible, and reasonable may even be more complex, hidden, obscure, and irrational than relations between products - which by comparison might even appear relatively simple and clear. Moreover, while it is possible that the gap between appearance and a deeper reality may be overcome in some areas, it does not seem very likely that it could be overcome in the individual psyche: the theoretical social science of psychology, then, would continue to have a place here. Nor is it obvious (even if it were possible) that it would be desirable to overcome the gap between appearance and reality in the psyche - it might well rob the individual of depth.

I do not wish to suggest here, as, say, Freud does in *Civilization and Its Discontents*, that personal relations alone can be the source of conflict and aggression sufficient to disrupt society seriously.[158] It

seems to me that Marx is correct in arguing that material conditions play a major role in molding the character of personal relations and that the latter alone are insufficient to cause serious disruption to society. But I do wish to suggest that personal relations, even the most intimate ones, and perhaps especially the most intimate ones, cannot serve as a paradigm of clarity, intelligibility, and reasonableness which does not require going behind surface appearance to a deeper reality. Even in the sort of ideal humanized Communist society that Marx envisions, there would still be much to be done in overcoming alienation between individuals and building community between them.

At the same time, it seems to me that it is quite proper to say that much of what would remain to be done here should not be done by social institutions and thus the discussion of such matters would not belong to the realm of social theory. In this sense Marx is correct not to discuss these matters. Social institutions should not attempt to interfere with or mold the psyche of the individual. The attempt to do so would be to risk totalitarianism. These matters should be left to individuals themselves. Society should only provide the material conditions that would allow individuals to deal with these matters themselves. But there would be much left for them to deal with.

IX. SCIENCE AND METAPHYSICS

In Chapter 1, I argued that Marx' concept of essence was metaphysical in the sense that his claims concerning essence could not be empirically verified. However, I also argued that essences were metaphysical in a further and more important sense - they were actual realities which differed from and generated empirical existence. There were two ontological levels to reality. It is frequently argued that much of what Marx says in *Capital*, especially what he says about value, is also metaphysical. This is what we must discuss in this section.

If Marx' views in *Capital* are metaphysical, it is not because Marx posits two ontological levels to reality, as we have seen, but simply because his claims are not empirically verifiable. Keat and Urey have recently attempted to discuss these issues at length. They begin by defending an anti-positivist view of natural science in which the researcher posits theoretical entities in an attempt to understand behind-the-scenes mechanisms, structures, or essences that explain observable phenomena. These theoretical entities (e.g., atomic particles, genes, viruses, etc.) are often not observable when first posited, though some may eventually come to be observed as the research progresses and new techniques and instruments are developed.

Keat and Urey argue that Marx follows a similar approach in his social theory and that it is scientific not metaphysical.[159]

Thus, we might say that Marx' procedure is not metaphysical because: (1) essences are not metaphysical realities which actually generate surface appearance as was the case in 1844[160], and (2) because the positing of unobservable theoretical entities in itself is not metaphysical - natural scientists do it frequently. But is this enough to save Marx from the charge of metaphysics? Marx' theoretical entities (e.g., value) can never be observed or directly verified. It is true that this can also be the case in natural science, but in natural science, it is often argued, theories can be tested through the generation of accurate predictions. If Marx' theory rules out prediction, as I have argued that it does, it cannot be tested in this way. Can it then be argued that it is not metaphysical? As we have seen, some established sciences, like Darwinian evolutionary biology, are not capable of making accurate predictions. The only further answer that Marx can give, I suggest (and this is something that Keat and Urey do not emphasize sufficiently), would be to remind us that when fetishism is overcome these theoretical entities will no longer exist and will no longer be called for by theoretical science. Marx' goal in positing these unobservable structures is certainly not to establish their permanent existence. It is to enable us to understand their "social mode of existence" in a fetishized society so that we can transform this society. Marx admits that these entities have a metaphysical appearance; they are things "abounding in metaphysical subtleties". But his aim is precisely to eliminate these metaphysical appearances as well as the need for a science which posits them.[161] If one decides to call Marx' procedure metaphysical, it at least is not so in any ordinary or simple way, nor, as I see it, in any very serious way.[162]

We must ask what it amounts to to call Marx' views metaphysical. Does it mean that Marx should have abandoned this method? I do not think so. It seems to me that his views are illuminating and informative despite the fact that they are not scientific in the strict sense. I have only argued that his views are not metaphysical in any very significant way. This, of course, does not make them strictly scientific especially if we accept verifiability or falsifiability as the criterion for demarcating science. However, these criteria are not accepted by all contemporary philosophers of science.[163]

At any rate, I certainly do not wish to argue that historical materialism is a proven, well-established science on a level with other mainstream sciences (as many orthodox Marxists want to claim). I only wish to argue that Marx' claims are intelligible, meaningful, involve an

empirical element as well as procedures found in other sciences, and that this can be so without his claims being empirically testable according to the standards of some natural sciences. To argue that Marx' views are scientific in any stricter sense seems to me to be out of place.

In the *German Ideology* Marx rejected many of the views he had held in the *1844 Manuscripts*. In the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* he rejected many of the views he had held in the *German Ideology* and moved closer to some of those he had held in 1844 but not without modifying them in view of the insights gained in the *German Ideology*. The development of Marx' thought is a complex matter that requires careful study of details. It cannot be summed up as an essential unity or as a neat rupture.

CHAPTER FOUR

Engels and Dialectics

In his very influential book, *History and Class Consciousness*, Georg Lukács argued that Engels illegitimately extended Marx' dialectical method beyond the social realm to the realm of nature and in doing so replaced Marx' dialectical theory of knowledge (in which subject and object are reciprocally transformed) with a contemplative reflection theory (in which subject and object "persist in their old, rigid opposition").[1]

Since then, and very much in the same spirit, many others, for example Schmidt, Fetscher, and Jordan, have located the difference between Marx and Engels not in their treatments of historical materialism and its method but in Engels' extension of this method to nature - thus in his dialectic of nature - as well as in the theory of reflection which accompanies it.[2] I shall try to argue precisely the opposite, namely, that their differences are to be located in the former, far more than in the latter, areas.

I. HISTORICAL MATERIALISM AND DETERMINISM

In studying Engels' views concerning what in 1890 he labeled "historical materialism" and in comparing Engels to Marx we discover something of a paradox. Engels' version of historical materialism seems to involve both a much stronger yet at the same time a much weaker form of determinism than does Marx' version. Engels, for example, is willing to claim such strict necessity in history that "if a Napoleon had been lacking, another would have filled the place" - a position which is never suggested by Marx.[3] Indeed Marx generally holds that material conditions only determine the circumstances which can either assist or hinder the development of naturally given talents or capacities.[4] Without individual talent or capacity, material conditions alone would never produce or replace a Napoleon. Thus Engels makes a much stronger claim than Marx ever did.

On the other hand, Engels wants to insist that the relationship between ideas and material conditions is one of reciprocal interaction: that ideas frequently, at least in the short run, preponderate in determining material conditions, and that economic conditions only "finally", "ultimately", or in the "last instance" predominate. After 1845, Marx consistently denied this sort of mutual determinism - he denied that ideas ever independently determine material conditions short

of Communist society.[5] Here Marx seems to make the stronger, and Engels the weaker, claim.

How are we to explain this paradox? Moreover, is it possible to explain how Engels can hold these two seemingly incompatible positions - if determinism by material conditions is so weak that it only occurs in the last instance, can such determinism be sufficient to insure a Napoleon or his replacement?

In the first place we must notice that for Engels the very same laws govern nature, history, and the human mind.[6] Engels operates with a single monistic model of matter and motion in order to explain all realms of reality. In *Anti-Dühring* (1877-8), which Engels tells us he read to Marx in its entirety before publication, there is no claim that thought is material, but simply that consciousness is a product of nature. However, in the *Dialectics of Nature* (1873-8), which Engels left unpublished, and in *Ludwig Feuerbach* (1886), published after Marx' death, Engels does hold that the mind is a product of matter and that some day thought will be explained as "molecular and chemical motions in the brain".[7] This is a position at which Marx never even hinted.[8]

Moreover, in *Ludwig Feuerbach*, in notes which were not included in *Anti-Dühring*, and in letters written in the 1890s, Engels clearly holds that material conditions determine not merely the content of thought but thought processes themselves.[9] Marx never suggests that the latter are determined but simply that social reality conditions the content of our thought.[10]

For Engels, historical causes acting through the minds of individuals determine their will, their passions, even their motives and intentions. These intentions play an important role in history in one sense but in another sense do not. Engels understands history on a model much like that of Adam Smith's 'invisible hand', Kant's 'Idea for a Universal History', or Hegel's 'cunning of reason'. Historical events result from the actions of individuals and their intentions, but individuals interact and clash such that the historical result is not what any individual actually intended. A conflict between innumerable individual wills produces a play of forces which is strictly determined in a way entirely analogous to what prevails in nature. Intentions enter into this strictly determined process as motive causes of individual action, but the historical outcome is not decided by or identical with any individual intention. The historical outcome is a resultant of the total constellation of forces. There is absolute necessity here - at one level our intentions are strictly determined and at another level the historical event is the necessary outcome of a complex parallelogram of forces. In this way the rise of a Napoleon like any other event would be necessarily determined.[11]

Given the strict and thorough-going necessity claimed for this process, Engels is free to accept the mutual determination of ideas and material conditions.[12] A moment ago this appeared to be a much weaker form of determinism and thus a paradox, but once we see that ideas (philosophic theories, religious views, etc.) would be just as determined as any other natural phenomena, then we see that they may well predominate in influencing material conditions without affecting the overall necessity of this process in the slightest.

Indeed, Engels argues that the only way to deny mutual determinism and to arrive at the notion that material conditions simply determine consciousness is to hold a mistaken and undialectical view of causality - a view which takes cause and effect to be rigidly opposed poles and which rejects all interaction. Reciprocal interaction, for Engels, is a characteristic of history as well as of nature - thus of all reality in general. To speak of isolated causes and effects requires that we abstract them, tear them out of their general interconnection. Reality is matter in motion with different motions passing into one another and mutually determining each other; each in one place cause and in another place effect. All of these interactions are bound into one interconnected whole.[13]

To add that economic conditions will predominate in the last instance is merely to indicate how society has come to figure in this natural process. In early history, Engels holds, religious and philosophical ideas, conceptions of nature, notions of magic, etc., had no economic cause. Even in later history, existing bodies of thought material are simply handed down by tradition; economic factors produce no new content in this realm but only "determine the way in which the material is altered and further developed".[14] Economic conditions as they arise and develop come to play a role within a necessary natural process which existed well before and which remains more fundamental than these economic conditions.[15]

The *German Ideology* (1845-6), which Marx and Engels wrote together, argued that material conditions determine consciousness, not the reverse. In 1890 Engels claimed that this had been an over-reaction to their opponents.[16] Both Marx and Engels did back away from the position of the *German Ideology* in later years, but in opposite directions. Marx came to deny a strict form of determinism, but he did not endorse a mutual determinism of consciousness and material conditions.[17] Engels, on the other hand, if anything, argues a more thorough-going determinism of ideas by material conditions than in the *German Ideology*, but decides that economic conditions and consciousness, at least in the short run, can be mutually determining.

II. DIALECTICAL METHOD

For Engels, "dialectical philosophy" involves three elements. First, it "reveals the transitory character of everything and in everything; nothing can endure before it except the uninterrupted process of becoming and of passing away, of endless ascendancy from the lower to the higher". Second, dialectical philosophy is "nothing more than the mere reflection of these processes in the thinking brain". Third, dialectical philosophy involves an attempt to systematize or organize the totality of all knowledge.[18]

The first together with the second of these points is aimed against Hegel's idealist method. Dialectical laws are not apriori laws of thought to be foisted upon nature or history. Dialectical laws are empirically discovered in nature itself and are reflected in our thought.[19]

The third point is aimed against Hegel's concept of a system. Engels argues that Hegel's historical, developmental, and dialectical method (valuable despite its idealist shortcomings) contradicts his system, i.e., his attempt to bring together in a final systematic way the sum total of absolute truth - simply an impossible task if all is eternally process and development as the method would have it. Nevertheless, even for Engels, if all phenomena of nature are interconnected and interacting, science is driven to show this connection throughout, to give a "general outlook on nature", and to connect the different sciences. This has nothing to do with absolute final truth but deals with "relative truth along the path of the positive sciences, and the summation of their results by means of dialectical thinking".[20]

What can we say about this system? Is it necessary in the sense that we must be in possession of a conceptual paradigm for a field before any meaningful empirical study of it can be carried out, or is the system simply a matter of completing and organizing existing knowledge gotten without its aid?

In the *Grundrisse* Marx argued the first position for political economy. He claimed that it was necessary to work up a concrete for thought (a theoretical model which organizes and connects the relevant categories of modern society) before we can make sense out of the otherwise chaotic actual concrete, its historical development, or engage in the empirical study of either.[21]

There are hints of this sort of thing in Engels' writings. In the *Dialectics of Nature* he speaks of the construction of an ideal theoretical model (of a steam engine) which allowed the investigator to cut through a maze of irrelevant detail and to reach significant results. Furthermore, in his famous discussion of Lavoisier's revolution in chemistry (in the Preface to Volume II of *Capital*) Engels argues that Priestley was unable to recognize oxygen when he produced it because he remained a

prisoner of the phlogistic categories as they had come down to him and that Lavoisier's development of the new chemistry required a revolution in the terms and categories of the science.[22] But despite these approximations to Marx' position, Engels for the most part holds that it is quite possible and indeed necessary for science to study phenomena in isolation from their interconnections and that an understanding of overall connection only comes later.[23]

Moreover, Engels misunderstands Marx' position on these matters. In his review of Marx' *Critique of Political Economy*, Engels begins by telling us that for Hegel the evolution of ideas always paralleled the evolution of history. Then in turning to a discussion of Marx' method he quite mistakenly[24] argues a similar position for Marx. Engels argues that the order in which the categories would be taken up and organized by what Engels calls the logical method would be the same order in which they appeared historically; in other words, that the logical method is nothing but the historical method stripped of its historical form, i.e., its historical zigzags, leaps, and chance occurrences.[25] This is radically to mischaracterize Marx' method which explicitly claims that the construction of the concrete for thought, the logical method, which interconnects and organizes the categories, is not only necessary before we can understand the actual concrete and its historical development but that the order in which the logical method takes up and connects the categories is not at all the order in which they arose historically.[26]

Engels is still trapped within the methodological outlook of the *German Ideology*, which did argue for a straightforward empirical study of phenomena and their historical development and where the logical method was the historical method stripped of zigzags and chance occurrences.[27] While Engels does seem to have a sense of scientific revolution and a sense that categories and conceptual models can assist or hinder discovery, he leaves these insights undeveloped. He seems to have no real sense of the fundamental necessity of a paradigm for all interpretation, investigation, and discovery. *Or, is it the case that Engels is quietly rejecting Marx' position?*

If you hold, as Engels does, that the same laws govern nature and the human mind, that ideas reflect reality, and that material conditions determine the processes of our thought, and if you then try to hold that it is necessary to have a conceptual paradigm, constructed by us, in order to reflect nature or society, it follows that you will have to hold that this construction and the process of constructing it were also determined by natural laws and material conditions. You would thus be holding that material conditions do not directly give rise to a reflection of themselves but first to a theoretical construction which mediates and only then makes reflection possible. This complicates an otherwise simple theory and Engels backs away from it. In so far as Engels

considers it at all, he insists that the conceptual structure, the logical method, must parallel the historical method, the actual development of material conditions. In this way there would be no special problems in holding that material conditions determine the logical ordering of the categories in the conceptual structure. In fact, for Engels, the logical method merely pares away superfluous and obfuscating detail in order to get to a clear, simple model of the actual and historical.[28]

Were Engels to admit that the logical method, the logical ordering of the categories, did not parallel historical reality and were he to admit that the logical organization of categories was a necessary presupposition for knowing the actual and historical, real troubles would arise. Could he, for example, still hold that the same laws govern both processes, that the logical construction of the categorial structure would be determined by the same forces that determine the historical development of the actual concrete? He would at least have to admit that the laws were operating in a different and hidden way when determining the logical method. He would also be pushed toward the acceptance of an unknown thing-in-itself. In other words, we could not know how material reality produced the logical structure of categories since we only know material reality through this logical structure.

If you reject an unknown thing-in-itself as both Marx and Engels clearly do, then you either steer away from a methodological approach containing any conceptualist elements, which is what Engels did, or you deny that thought processes are determined by material conditions, which is what Marx did. By denying that thought processes are determined, Marx is able to argue that we are free to work up a categorial structure, a concrete for thought, which is able to reflect reality without leaving behind an unknown thing-in-itself. He does not hold that concrete reality determines the process of constructing this categorial structure, which it could only do in a hidden way since we only know through this structure. Engels, on the other hand, since he holds that thought processes are determined, must hold that the process of constructing the categorial structure is also determined. If we are to know how this logical structure is produced by material conditions, then we must hold that the logical structure simply arises out of, directly parallels, and reflects the historical structure. If the logical structure differed from the historical, and if we only know through the logical structure, we could not know how the logical structure had been produced.[29]

III. EPISTEMOLOGY

It is quite clear that both Marx and Engels reject the notion of an

unknown thing-in-itself. How well Engels understand this concept and whether his arguments against it are convincing is another question. Engels seems to assume that the belief in an unknown thing-in-itself arises in the gap between original hypothesis (or the first hesitant steps in the process of experiment and discovery) and the final, clearly proven law. Delay in the process of discovery, competing hypotheses, and conflicting theories lead some to think that we can never get at the essence of things, the thing-in-itself. But when science continually arrives at the law and especially when it is able to reproduce the natural process, then, Engels thinks, the belief in an unknown thing-in-itself is "disproven", shown to be mere illusion - hardly a satisfactory argument against, for example, a position like Kant's.[30]

The point, however, is that Engels simply refuses to countenance a difference between appearance and essence. For Engels we simply know a thing when we know its phenomenal qualities and can reproduce them. Reality is matter in motion as a complex interacting and interconnected totality. "We cannot go back further than to knowledge of this reciprocal action, for the very reason that there is nothing behind to know. If we know the forms of motion of matter (for which it is true there is still very much lacking, in view of the short time that natural science has existed), then we know matter itself, and therewith our knowledge is complete." If one tears phenomena out of this interconnection and considers them in isolation, without realizing what one is doing, then, Engels thinks, there arises a tendency to seek explanations beyond or behind this interconnection and interaction.[31]

Engels does not operate with the categories of essence and appearance and he avoids any suggestion that, in either knowledge or praxis, nature in-itself is transformed into a for-us such that the in-itself remains unknown. Engels certainly admits that praxis transforms the natural world, the effect of its laws, and even human beings themselves.[32] But he never suggests that consciousness, perception, or knowledge are to be understood as such a praxis; they do not transform an in-itself and constitute it as a mere for-us. The process of experiment and discovery characteristic of natural science, Engels does call a praxis, but far from transforming an in-itself into a for-us, it is through such praxis that we overcome the illusion of the Kantian unknown thing-in-itself. Praxis in science is understood as experimentation, a testing and proving of hypotheses[33], such that our concepts end up reflecting real objects and processes in the world.[34]

IV. DIALECTIC OF NATURE

There are places in which Marx tells us that he accepts the validity of

dialectical laws for nature (at least the law of the transformation of quantity into quality). In *Capital* Marx says: "here, as in natural science, is shown the correctness of the law discovered by Hegel (in his "Logic"), that merely quantitative differences beyond a certain point pass into qualitative changes." It is also the case, we are told, that Engels read the entire text of *Anti-Dühring* to Marx before its publication and, it would seem, Marx approved it.[35]

Since Marx had so little to say about a dialectic of nature, those scholars who locate the difference between Marx and Engels here usually ignore what Marx did say and try to prove that such a dialectic would be incompatible with Marx' epistemology. They do this by arguing that for Marx it is not just praxis, the praxis of labor or industry, which transforms its object, but that consciousness too is a form of praxis, i.e., that it too plays an active role in dialectically transforming and constituting the object.

If this were actually Marx' position, then these scholars would be correct: the doctrine of a dialectic of nature independent of our consciousness as well as the theory of reflection which would accompany it would be quite incompatible with the notion that consciousness plays a role in dialectically constituting the object.[36] But, as I have shown earlier, after 1845 Marx ceased to hold that consciousness independently transforms its object.[37] If I am correct then there is no good reason to hold that Marx rejects a dialectic of nature and thus no major difference between Marx and Engels is to be found at this level.[38]

Thus both Marx and Engels accept that (1) there is a dialectic to nature itself, (2) that nature itself and its laws influence human beings and society, and (3) that human beings and society interact with and transform nature, its laws, and its effect upon human beings and society. The fact that society and nature interact is not at all incompatible with a dialectic of either nature or society. Incompatibility only arises if we assume that consciousness dialectically constitutes the object.

The difference between Marx and Engels is instead to be located in the area which Engels calls historical materialism and in its method. Put most simply, Marx does not hold Engels' view that mental processes are determined, and Engels cannot accept Marx' methodological doctrine that it is only the construction of a structure of categories that reflects reality.

Thus, two of the main concerns of Marx scholars, the relation of the earlier to the later Marx and the relation of Marx to Engels, are closely tied together. The inability to locate accurately the difference between Marx and Engels, a difficulty characteristic of many of those who hold to the essential unity of Marx' thought, is due precisely to

their inability to see or accept a shift in Marx' thought, namely, his abandonment after 1845 of the notion that consciousness constitutes and transforms its object.

CONCLUSION

If I am correct about the shifts in Marx' views which have been discussed in the preceding chapters, it becomes impossible to accept the theory that there is an essential unity to Marx' thought.[1] It does not follow from this, however, that the later Marx ceases to be a humanist as Althusser would have it. Rather, as I shall try to show, his humanism simply undergoes a modification.

The radical humanism of the *1844 Manuscripts* was understood as a metaphysical humanization of all reality. All reality, natural as well as social, was taken to be the outcome of a process, a process which to achieve its highest development necessarily involved the human essence as a causal factor. All reality was transformed, constituted, and realized by human praxis and consciousness. The outcome was a radical metaphysical anthropology which was at the same time a cosmogony; the world was created by and for the human being. With the overcoming of alienation, human beings were to be at home in a world which was the objectification of their essence. To establish this radical metaphysical humanism, the humanization of all reality, Marx developed an epistemology in which consciousness, not merely praxis, played a role in constituting the object and in which consciousness and material conditions mutually determined each other.

In the *German Ideology*, Marx abandoned this metaphysical concept of essence; he ceased to imply that consciousness independently transformed the object (a position made explicit later in the *Grundrisse*); and he ceased to hold that consciousness and material conditions mutually determine each other. While Marx did change his mind about the degree to which material conditions determine consciousness, especially in conjunction with his changing views on method, he always held that short of Communist society material conditions predominate and that ideas do not independently determine material conditions. The forces and relations of production follow their own dynamic and structure human beings and their world. In the *1844 Manuscripts* all reality was absorbed into a metaphysical anthropology. In the later writings all human reality seems to be absorbed into and structured by the actual concrete relations of capitalist society.

While it is true that the forces and relations of production, for the later Marx, are not the objectification of the human essence and are not absorbed into a metaphysical anthropology, nevertheless, we need not

go overboard in the opposite direction, as Althusser does when he denies altogether that the forces and relations of production can be reduced to human relations. This is simply not Marx' view of the matter. In a letter to Annenkov in 1846 Marx says:

> What is society . . . ? The product of men's reciprocal action . . . . Assume a particular state of development in the productive faculties of man and you will get a particular form of commerce and consumption. . . . The productive forces are therefore the result of practical human energy . . . . A history of humanity takes shape which is all the more a history of humanity as the productive forces of man . . . . Hence it necessarily follows that the social history of men is never anything but the history of their individual development, whether they are conscious of it or not.[2]

Althusser's error, what he totally misses, is that for Marx the forces and relations of production only appear as abstract, impersonal structural relations because of fetishism or alienation. It is fetishism which hides the fact that they are actually human relations. In the *Grundrisse* Marx discusses the fact that "labour appears . . . not as mediated and determined by the simultaneous existence of the labour of others", but rather that "the worker's activity, reduced to a mere abstraction of activity, is determined and regulated on all sides by the movement of the machinery and not the opposite". It is true that during this discussion Marx does not use the terms "alienation", "estrangement", or "fetishism", but he certainly employs the concepts and in the very same way that he does in *Capital*, where fetishism produces a situation in which social relations appear as abstract relationships between products or things rather than as what they are, relationships between persons.[3] In other words, social relationships only cease to appear as human relationships with the rise of fetishism. Science, it is true, as it begins to study modern society, confronts these abstract non-human relationships as established realities, as the only realities. Marx' dialectical method, as we saw in Chapter 3, begins with these abstract categories or relations and seeks to connect them into an abstract structure. The whole point, however, is ultimately to get beyond this structure. Science first confronts a "social hieroglyphic. Later on, we try to decipher the hieroglyphic, to get behind the secret of our own social products."[4] The whole point is to overcome fetishism and thus the need for science and abstract structures so as to return to simple, clear, intelligible, particular, human, and personal relationships.[5]

Social relations are being reduced to human relations and social science is intended to wither away in a humanized society. Althusser would have us keep science embedded within the fetishized appearance of things. To fail to understand Marx' dialectical method, and especially to fail to understand that it is intended to wither away as fetishism and the gap between essence and appearance are overcome, is to fail to understand the humanistic dimension of Marx' thought.

Thus we can neither accept the theory of an essential unity to Marx' thought, which would commit us to a humanism that involved a metaphysical concept of essence, nor can we accept Althusser's anti-humanism, which is predicated upon the theory of an epistemological break in Marx' thought.

The humanism of the later Marx, while in some ways quite different, is, in other ways, quite similar to that of the early Marx. The goal of Marx' humanism in *Capital* and the *Grundrisse* is much the same as it was in the *1844 Manuscripts*. It is to overcome alienation or fetishism by bringing social relations under the collective, conscious, purposive, and rational control of human beings themselves. The goal was the same in 1844, but the ontological significance of this goal and the way its achievement was conceived was different. In 1844 it was conceived as the realization of the human essence understood metaphysically. It involved the humanization of all reality and its absorption into a metaphysical anthropology. In the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* this metaphysical dimension has been dropped but the humanism remains. In the *Grundrisse* Marx writes:

> Nature builds no machines, no locomotives, railways, electric telegraphs, self-acting mules, etc. These are products of human industry; natural material transformed into organs of the human will over nature, or of human participation in nature. They are organs of the human brain, created by the human hand, the power of knowledge objectified. The development of fixed capital indicates to what degree general social knowledge has become a force of production, and to what degree, hence, the conditions of the process of social life itself have come under the control of the general intellect and have been transformed in accordance with it.[6]

Moreover, Communist society seeks "universally developed individuals, whose social relations, as their own communal relations, are hence also subordinated to their own communal control . . ."[7] Furthermore, Marx argues that freedom will be found in the labor process when collectively associated workers rationally and scientifically

regulate "their interchange with nature, bringing it under common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of nature . . . " [8] In Volume I of *Capital* Marx describes socialist society as a society which regulates consciously and collectively the forces and relations of production according to a social plan.[9]

It is a serious mistake to oppose the later scientific Marx to the earlier humanistic Marx. Science and humanism are not opposed. The science of the later Marx does not replace his earlier humanism; it merely replaces his earlier metaphysical concept of essence. Science plays an all-important role in the realization of a humanistic society. The task of science is, first, to assist praxis in the reduction of fetishized social relations to human relations, and, thereafter, to assist in controlling these relations.

Furthermore, humanism, in 1844 as well as in the later writings, requires more than mere conscious control by human beings. It requires that this control be purposefully directed toward the development and enrichment of the individual. Society must create the "material elements for the development of the rich individual which is as all-sided in its production as in its consumption . . ."[10] In the *Grundrisse* Marx tells us that,

> Hunger is hunger, but the hunger gratified by cooked meat eaten with a knife and fork is a different hunger from that which bolts down raw meat with the aid of hand, nail, and tooth. Production thus produces not only the object but also the manner of consumption, not only objectively but also subjectively. Production thus creates the consumer. Production not only supplies a material for the need, but it also supplies a need for the material. As soon as consumption emerges from its initial state of natural crudity and immediacy - and if it remained at that stage, this would be because production itself had been arrested there - it becomes itself mediated as a drive by the object. The need which consumption feels for the obect is created by the perception of it. The object of art - like every other product - creates a public which is sensitive to art and enjoys beauty. Production thus creates not only an object for the subject, but also a subject for the object.[11]

While it is not explicitly mentioned in this passage, we can nevertheless easily imagine that conscious regulation of production in a socialist society would mean, not just that human beings would place themselves in control of the means of social development, but more importantly, that they could make themselves the end of this

development. They would begin to create the conditions which would allow them to control their own subjective development as individuals, to control and direct consciously the unfolding of their own historically created needs, powers, sensitivities, and knowledge.

It is clear that the human individual, for the later as well as for the early Marx, is society's goal. Marx' praise of the ancient world indicates his goal for socialist society:

> Do we ever find in antiquity an inquiry into which form of landed property, etc. is the most productive, i.e. creates the greatest wealth? Wealth does not appear as the aim of production . . . . Thus the old view, in which the human being appears as the aim of production . . . seems very lofty when contrasted to the modern world, where production appears as the aim of mankind and wealth the aim of production.[12]

The humanism of the later Marx seeks "the full material conditions for the total, universal development of the productive forces of the individual".[13]

Social interaction between human beings and between human beings and nature - thus their forces and relations of production - must be brought under the conscious, collective, rational, and scientific control of these human beings themselves and must be purposively directed so as to make possible the highest development of these individuals. They must construct a social world which will provide the conditions for this development as well as an arena for putting their developed powers, capacities, and knowledge into practice. Marx changed his mind about the means which would reveal and help to make possible the realization of this goal but he did not change his mind about the goal itself. He changed his mind about the character of reality and the means of studying, coming to understand, and transforming it, but not about the end for which this was to be done.

Many Marxists would argue that any study of Marx should employ a Marxist method. It may appear that in this book I have not done so. But this depends upon what one takes Marx' method to be. If, for example, one thinks that Marx' method has been set out in the *German Ideology,* then to study Marx using his own method would mean showing how Marx' thought arose from and was determined by material conditions. We would begin by studying the forces and relations of production as they existed in Marx' own epoch and then show how they influenced Marx' thought. Actually, we would have to

study these material conditions over a longer period of time in order to show how they gave rise to and determined the thought of Kant and Hegel; then how changes in these material conditions gave rise to and determined the philosophical development culminating in Marx; and finally how these material conditions gave rise to and determined the intellectual development we have found in Marx himself. Obviously, I have not done this. But this is because I think that the method of the *German Ideology* is one that Marx abandoned in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* - a method which he came to see was not the scientifically correct method. I think I have tried to follow what Marx calls the scientifically correct method in studying Marx, or at least a method which approximates Marx' method. In the *Grundrisse*, Marx tells us that we must study phenomena when they have achieved the highest stage of their development - where they achieve their highest level of abstraction and complexity. At that point, we can work out an abstract conceptual structure or paradigm which grasps the whole of the phenomenon as well as the structural interconnection of its parts. I have tried at least to begin to work out such a paradigm of Marx' method at the point of its highest development.

Only with such a paradigm, Marx tells us, can we begin to understand the details of the phenomenon under study and only at this point can we begin to understand its historical development out of earlier stages. In this way I have tried to understand how Marx' earlier views were steps leading to this highest stage as well as how the earlier philosophical tradition of Kant and Hegel fits into this development.

Just as for Marx, this development is not be be understood as a teleological one in which earlier stages aim at the later ones. Rather, it is merely the case that once we have reached the later stages, we gain the perspective that will allow us to look back at the course of development and come to understand how we arrived at where we stand - the final stage. I admit, however, that I have not followed Marx' method exactly. For example, I did not begin by treating the highest stage of his development first in this book - that I think would confuse the reader - but I have worked in a circle in the sense that the first chapters of this book were given their final form with Chapter 3 on Marx' dialectical method already worked out. Nor have I followed Marx' method in a complete way. An adequate working out of the paradigm which grasps the high point of Marx' development should be followed by a much more thorough treatment of the historical development that led up to it - a good many philosophers besides Kant and Hegel, other sorts of theorists, and a discussion of social, economic, and political conditions should be included. In this respect

my study is a very limited one.

Many Marxists who think that Marx' method ought to be used to study Marx do so because they think that Marx' method is the one true method for any such study, or perhaps they even seek to show that it actually is the one true method. My reasons for employing Marx' method are quite different. I do not seek to prove that it is the one true method. Nor do I seek to disprove this. These are just not my concerns. My concern is with the history of philosophy. Any study of a historical figure must be written from a perspective. The historian of philosophy wants as much as is possible to write from the perspective of the philosopher being studied or at least from a perspective which approximates that of the philosopher being studied. Historians of philosophy want to avoid writing from their own contemporary perspective at least in the sense that they want to avoid as much as is possible projecting their own views back onto their subject. And this, it seems to me, is what many contemporary Marxists do when writing about Marx. I have tried to understand Marx' method and to use it in studying Marx in order to avoid these difficulties.

At the same time, I must admit that Marx' own method implies that the perspective which one takes up in studying any phenomenon determines to a great extent what one will see and how one will see it. If you are an orthodox Soviet Marxist and you take your own world to be the high point of a development, then when you look back to Marx you will see him in one way, a very different way than Western humanistic Marxists taking their own perspective as the high point of a development would. There are many legitimate perspectives to start from and I cannot deny that the ones I have just mentioned would be quite legitimate ones. They would give us different perspectives on Marx and teach us different things about him. If you begin your study from one perspective, when you look back to try to explain the historical development that led up to it, certain things will fall into relief, seem significant, and be emphasized - very different things than if you start from another perspective.

Nevertheless, I am not really convinced that most contemporary Marxists really understand Marx' dialectical method, let alone use it. Most of them seem to be unaware that it differs from the method of the *German Ideology* and they seem to be unaware of how, for Marx, a paradigm makes the study of history possible. I say this because most Marxists do not even discuss Marx' method as it is outlined in the *Grundrisse* and employed in *Capital*, and also because they usually make no attempt first to work out the paradigm which explains their own epoch or perspective before they go back to see how Marx was a

stage that led up to it. Rather, they usually do the very opposite - they first try to understand Marx and then perhaps with a few words about the relation of theory to praxis they simply use him in order to explain or reinforce their own views. Even if one is trying to develop a theory of one's own praxis rather than write a study of Marx, Marx' method would dictate that you start by constructing the paradigm that explains your own epoch before it is possible to understand how Marx might have any relevance to it. To take the opposite approach is not only questionable as history of philosophy but it violates Marx' own method. It leads to treating Marx as if he were one's own contemporary; it runs the risk of allowing one's own views to be projected onto Marx; and often enough it ends in an attempt to call on Marx' authority to justify one's own partisan goals.

Often, these scholars seek the 'true' Marx, who, when found, not very surprisingly, turns out to hold the very same views that they themselves hold, while their opponents suspect that they have simply projected their own views back onto Marx. I do not wish to suggest that these difficulties are easy to avoid, nor even that I have succeeded in avoiding them, but merely that I have adopted Marx' method in studying Marx in order to try to avoid them and as well to try to cut Marx off from his contemporary relevance as this is seen by essential unity theorists, orthodox Marxists, and Althusser, who it seems to me do project their own views back onto Marx often with great abandon. Readers will have to make up their own minds as to who has succeeded and who has failed here.

It may sound as if I want to preserve Marx as a historical relic - a philosopher locked in the past without any relevance for the present. I do not think this is so. Figures in the history of philosophy are not constrained from entering the historical arena and having historical effect more than once. When the *1844 Manuscripts* and the *Grundrisse* were discovered in the first part of our century, Marx entered history a second time and made an enormous impact at least in the intellectual world. Any historical figure when recovered and reinterpreted by a historian may have a new historical impact. I hope that I have at least taken a small step in this direction with Marx, and I hope that in so far as I have done so I have uncovered a better and more humanistic Marx than we have been aware of before.

ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Engels, *Anti-Dühring*
C	Marx, *Capital*
CHPL	Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*
CHPLI	Marx, 'Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law, Introduction'
CPE	Marx, *Critique of Political Economy*
Dissertation	Marx, *Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature*
DN	Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*
EPM	Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*
'Free Press'	Marx, 'Debates on Freedom of the Press'
G	Marx, *Grundrisse*
GI	Marx & Engels, *German Ideology*
GKPO	Marx, *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie*
'Gotha'	Marx, 'Critique of the Gotha Program'
HF	Marx, *Holy Family*
'Leading Article'	Marx, 'Leading Article No. 179 of the *Kölnische Zeitung'*
LF	Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy*
Logic	Hegel, *Science of Logic*
Logik	Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik*
Manifesto	Marx, *Communist Manifesto*
MECW	Marx & Engels, *Karl Marx Friederich Engels Collected Works*
MEPP	Marx & Engels, *Marx & Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*
MEW	Marx & Engels, *Marx-Engels Werke*
PG	Hegel, *Phänomenologie des Geistes*
PM	Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind*
PN	Hegel, *Philosophy of Nature*
PP	Marx, *Poverty of Philosophy*

SC	Marx & Engels, *Marx Engels Selected Correspondence*
TF	Marx, *Theses on Feuerbach*
TSV	Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value*
'Wood Theft'	Marx, 'Debates on the Law on Thefts of Wood'

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. For arguments that the interest in humanism began as a reaction against the Marxism of the Second International and Stalinism, see A. Schaff, *Marxism and the Human Individual,* trans. O. Wojtasiewicz, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1970, p. 3. I. Fetscher, *Marx and Marxism*, New York, Herder and Herder, 1971, pp. 148ff. L. Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. B. Brewster, New York, Pantheon, 1969, p. 10. L. Althusser and E. Balibar, *Reading Capital*, London, NLB, 1970, pp. 119-20.

2. G. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. R. Livingstone, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1971. See also K. Korsch, *Marxism and Philosophy*, trans. F. Halliday, New York and London, Monthly Review Press, 1970.

3. Selections from the *German Ideology* were first published in 1926. The first complete edition appeared in 1932. The *Grundrisse* first appeared in 1939 and 1941, though the Introduction was first published in 1903.

4. P.J. Kain, *Schiller, Hegel, and Marx*, Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1982.

5. The latter view could already be found in Lukács, pp. 1-26.

6. Fromm tends in this direction but holds that if Marx' humanism is limited to the early works then the young Marx is the preferred Marx; see *Marx's Concept of Man*, New York, Ungar, 1966, p. 69.

7. See, for example, Fromm, pp. 24-5, 51-2, 74ff. T. Carver, *Texts on Method*, New York, Barnes and Noble, 1975, pp. 38-40. Fetscher, pp. 9-25. S. Avineri, *Karl Marx: Social and Political Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970, pp. 2, 39, 102, 123.

8. See, for example, M. Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1979, pp. 6-7. R. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1964, pp. 169-72.

9. A. Sánchez Vásquez, *The Philosophy of Praxis*, Trans. M. Gonzales, London, Merlin, 1977, p. 109. For others who argue an

essential unity, see L. Colletti, *Marxism and Hegel*, trans. L. Garner, London, NLB, 1973, pp. 228-33. A. Schmidt, *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, trans. B. Fowkes, London, NLB, 1971, p. 214. Schaff, pp. 22, 24. See also S. Landshut and J-P. Mayer's 'Introduction' to Karl Marx, *Oeuvres Philosophiques*, trans. J. Molitor, Paris, Costes, 1947, IV, pp. xiv-xvii. Also L. Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, trans. P.S. Falla, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1978, I, 181-2, 236-7, 262-7.

10. Sánchez Vásquez, pp. 141, 341.

11. See Lukács, pp. 3-4, 19, 130, 202, but also xviff. Schmidt, pp. 35, 66, 77. L. Kołakowski, 'Karl Marx and the Classical Definition of Truth' in *Toward a Marxist Humanism*, trans. J.Z. Peel, New York, Grove, 1968, pp. 42-51. Schaff, pp. x, 37-8. Sánchez Vásquez, pp. 113, 116, 119-20. Z.A. Jordan, *The Evolution of Dialectical Materialism*, London and New York, Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1967, pp. 27-31. Avineri, pp. 65-77. For an interesting critique of these positions, see J. Hoffman, *Marxism and the Theory of Praxis*, New York, International, 1975.

12. This frequently involves a complete misunderstanding of Engels, who, in fact, in these letters holds a much more determinist position than Marx does; see below, Chapter 4, Section I.

13. Jordan, p. 33. Fromm, p. 22.

14. Lukács, pp. 3-4, 24 (note 6), 199-202. Schmidt, pp. 16, 26-7, 51-61, 166ff. Fetscher, pp. 149-51, 174-5. Jordan, pp. 3-15, 25-7, 56, 321-2, 325-9, 333. Avineri, pp. 65-9.

15. See, for example, Hoffman.

16. *For Marx*, pp. 28-35. In his more recent book, *Lenin and Philosophy*, Althusser has decided that the mature Marx can only be found in the very late 'Critique of the Gotha Program' (1875) and in the 'Notes on Adolph Wagner' (1879-80); see L. Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy*, New York and London, Monthly Review Press, 1971, pp. 93-4. This is to throw out most of Marx in order to force him into one's own categories.

17. *For Marx*, pp. 185-9, 198-9, 244, 249. *Reading Capital*, pp. 148-57.

18. *Reading Capital*, pp. 145-57.

19. *For Marx*, pp. 13, 221-3.

20. *Reading Capital*, pp. 139-40, 171-4.

21. In a very interesting book, S. Timpanaro rejects humanism as does Althusser but also rejects Althusser's anti-empiricism; see *On Materialism*, trans. L. Garner, London, NLB, 1975, pp. 68, 192-4.

22. *Reading Capital*, pp. 35-43, 62-3, 87, 106-8, 117, 139-40.

23. There are many other important shifts in Marx' thought

which will not fit with Althusser's notion of a clear *coupure epistémologique* and neat periods. I have discussed these in *Schiller, Hegel, and Marx.*

24. L. Sève, *Man in Marxist Theory and the Psychology of Personality*, trans. J. McGreal, Sussex, Harvester, 1978, pp. 65ff.

25. Sève, pp. 63-129, 292-3 (note 202).

26. J. Zelený, *The Logic of Marx*, trans. T. Carver, Oxford, Blackwell, 1980, pp. 131, 185-6. Schmidt too is critical of Althusser and has some helpful things to say about Marx' method in the *Grundrisse.* However, he seems to reject the notion that there are shifts in Marx' thought; see A. Schmidt, *History and Structure: An Essay on Hegelian-Marxist and Structuralist Theories of History,* trans. J. Herf, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1981. For another discussion of method in the *Grundrisse*, see Carver, pp. 3-45, 88-158. However, Carver too rejects the view that there are shifts in Marx' thought; Carver, pp. 38-9.

27. Zelený, pp. 180-5

28. J. Seigel, *Marx's Fate: The Shape of a Life*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978, pp. 8-9, 171-2, 294-317.

29. Seigel, pp. 195, 201-2, 212, 304, 317-24, 359-61.

30. A. Gouldner, *The Two Marxisms,* New York, Seabury, 1980, pp. 32-5, 58ff., 157, 169ff. The view that there is a contradiction between scientific and critical Marxism is also argued by Habermas and Wellmer. They argue that for Marx historical development is produced by instrumental action or human labor which is devoid of reflection. Yet Marx' process of investigation and his interest in emancipation require critical reflection or social action. See J. Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests,* trans. J. Shapiro, Boston, Beacon, 1971, pp. 43-4, 52-3; *Theory and Practice*, trans. J. Viertel, Boston, Beacon, 1974, pp. 195-252 *passim*; A. Wellmer, *Critical Theory of Society*, trans. J. Cumming, New York, Herder and Herder, 1971, Chapter 2, esp. pp. 70-5.

31. P.J. Kain, 'Estrangement and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat', *Political Theory*, VII (1979), pp. 509-20.

32. Gouldner, pp. 222-39.

33. M. Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History,* New York, Oxford University Press, 1979, pp. 3, 10, 56, 75ff. For another discussion of the organic model and the doctrine of internal relations in Marx' thought, see B. Ollman, *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, 2nd edition, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971. For a good critique of Ollman's position, see C. Gould, *Marx's Social Ontology,* Cambridge, MIT Press, 1978, pp. 38, 40, 87, 184 (note 22). Also see below, Chapter 3, note 48.

34. Rader, pp. 6-7.

35. *Ibid.* pp. 8-9, 55, 185-6.

36. W. Adamson, 'Marx's Four Histories: An Approach to his Intellectual Development', *History and Theory,* XX (1981), pp. 379-402. Also see Adamson's Review of Rader, Cohen, and Shaw in *Ibid.*, XIX (1980), pp. 188-91, 203.

CHAPTER ONE

1. K. Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts (EPM)* in *Karl Marx Frederick Engels Collected Works (MECW)*, New York, International, 1975ff., III, 336; for the German see *Marx Engels Werke (MEW)*, Berlin, Dietz, 1972ff., Ergänzungsband I, 577. K. Marx and F. Engels, *Holy Family (HF)*, *MECW*, IV, 125, 131 and *MEW*, II, 132, 139. Also *Theses on Feuerbach (TF)*, *MECW*, V, 3 and *MEW*, III, 5.

2. A. Schmidt, *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, trans. B. Fowkes, London, NLB, 1971, pp. 30, 34-5. Z.A. Jordan, *The Evolution of Dialectical Materialism*, London and New York, Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1967, pp. 13-4. S. Hook, *From Hegel to Marx*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1962, pp. 28-9.

3. Engels held all four doctrines but rejected mechanical for dialectical interaction; see *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy (LF)*, in *Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy*, ed. L.S. Feuer, Garden City, Anchor, 1959, pp. 205-11 and *MEW*, XXI, 272-9. Also *Anti-Dühring (AD)*, ed. C. Dutt, New York, International, 1939, pp. 26-9 and *MEW*, XX, 20-2. For Marx' characterization of traditional materialism, see *HF*, *MECW*, IV, 125ff. and *MEW*, II, 132ff.

4. See R.W. Sellars, 'Is Naturalism Enough?', *Journal of Philosophy*, XLI (1944), pp. 533-44. Jordan, pp. 13-4. S. Hook, 'Is Physical Realism Sufficient?', *Journal of Philosophy*, XLI (1944), pp. 544-51, esp. p. 549.

5. Jordan, pp. 13-4, 26, 35, 47, 61, 63-4. Schmidt, pp. 30, 34-5. *From Hegel to Marx*, p. 71.

6. In a gymnasium essay of 1835, it seems quite clear that Marx believes in God. He says: "the history of peoples teaches us the necessity of union with Christ". See 'The Union of Believers with Christ', *MECW*, I, 636, also 637-9 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 598, 599-601. Also, Marx uses language which suggests such belief in 'Reflections of a Young Man on the Choice of a Profession', *MECW*, I, 3-4 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 591-2. See also 'Marx to his Father on 10-11 Nov. 1837', *MECW*, I, 18 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 9. A clear rejection of religion can be found in 'Marx to Ruge on 30 Nov. 1842', *MECW*, I, 394-5

and *MEW*, XXVII, 412.

7. The materialism of the 17th and 18th centuries was certainly metaphysical in our first sense. Nevertheless, Marx claims it was anti-metaphysical, obviously meaning anti-idealistic; see *HF, MECW*, IV, 125-7 and *MEW*, II, 132-5.

8. *LF*, pp. 211, 227 and *MEW*, XXI, 278-9, 294. Also *AD*, pp. 27-8 and *MEW*, XX, 20-1. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Logic of Hegel,* trans. W. Wallace, London, Oxford University Press, 1904, pp. 62ff.; for the German see *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. H. Glockner, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, Frommann, 1965ff., VIII, 99ff.

9. It is often argued that Marx' doctrine of essence is not traditional or metaphysical because essences are not static and unchanging for Marx. See for example A. Sánchez Vásquez, *The Philosophy of Praxis*, trans. M. Gonzales, London, Merlin, 1977, pp. 339-40. This only shows that the doctrine is not traditional (metaphysical in the third sense), not that it is not metaphysical in the first sense.

Many contemporary philosophers of science admit that no scientific theory can be exclusively empirical. It must contain some theoretical elements which are not directly testable. Moreover, even observation is theory-laden. As we shall see in Chapter 2, however, Marx holds in the *German Ideology* that science should be exclusively empirical, and he certainly seems to think that theory-free observation is possible. Thus, when I deny that the method of the early Marx is empirical, I certainly mean that it is not like the method outlined in the *German Ideology*. I also mean more than that it contains theoretical elements which cannot be directly tested. It is metaphysical. However, one might still object that any science must make some assumptions that are metaphysical, at least in the sense that they cannot be confirmed by empirical experiment; for example, that all phenomena of nature are subject to causal laws or that nature as a whole is unified and consistent. It can be argued that we are justified in maintaining a theory which employs such principles as long as we hold that these principles are merely hypotheses, methodological rules, or regulative ideas. We can accept such theories as long as it is possible to formulate empirical tests which would be capable of falsifying particular instances of these principles or at least of conclusions that can be derived from the theory, and as long as they have not in fact been falsified. For Marx, however, essences are clearly more than methodological rules, regulative ideas, or hypotheses. In principle they could never be falsified by experience. Essences, for Marx, are taken to be realities which are located behind, which differ from, and which generate experience. For Marx, there are

two ontological levels to reality so that surface experience could not falsify the existence of an inner essence behind experience at another level of reality.

10. 'Leading Article No. 179 of the *Kölnische Zeitung*', *MECW*, I, 191-2 and *MEW*, I, 94 (my emphasis).

11. In the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law (CHPL)*, *MECW*, III, 39 and *MEW*, I, 241, Marx says: "these social modes of man's existence are regarded as the actualization, the objectification, of his essence ... The human being remains always the essence of all these entities, but these entities also appear as man's actual generality ..." See also *Difference Between the Democritean and Epicurean Philosophy of Nature (Dissertation)*, *MECW*, I, 61-2, 64 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 293-4, 296. Also 'On the Commissions of the Estates in Prussia', *MECW*, I, 295 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 408-9.

12. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 996b, 1014b-15a, 1017b, 1033b, 1039a. *Physics*, 193b, 198b-99b.

13. 'Debates on Freedom of the Press', *MECW*, I, 137 and *MEW*, I, 33. 'Comments on Mill', *MECW*, III, 218 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 452; *CHPL*, *MECW*, III, 88 and *MEW*, I, 292. *EPM*, *MECW*, III, 336 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 578.

14. *EPM*, *MECW*, III, 275-6 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 515-6.

15. 'Justification of the Correspondent from Mosel', *MECW*, I, 337 and *MEW*, I, 177.

16. 'Ban on the *Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung*', *MECW*, I, 312-4 and *MEW*, I, 153-5.

17. See *EPM*, *MECW*, III, 275-7 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 515-7, where Marx says: "Man makes his life activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness . . . it is only because he is a species-being that he is a conscious being, i.e., that his own life is an object for him . . . In creating a world of objects by his practical activity, in his work upon inorganic nature, man proves himself a conscious species-being, i.e., as a being that treats the species as its own essential being . . . "

18. In 'Free Press', *MECW*, I, 154 and *MEW*, I, 50, Marx says: "We must therefore take the essence of the inner idea as the measure to evaluate the existence of things." See also 'Letters from the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*', *MECW*, III, 142-3 and *MEW*, I, 344-5. *Dissertation*, *MECW*, I, 85, 491 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 326-9, 214-5.

19. Beginning in 1843, the development of essence toward its realization in existence need not proceed smoothly; it may involve estrangement. In this case the essence does continue to unfold, but

reconciliation is frustrated. Unable to satisfy their needs, the essential link between human beings and nature is severed so that they come to locate their essence not in existence but in an abstract distant realm which appears lost to them and which can only return to them when estrangement is overcome. See 'On the Jewish Question', *MECW*, III, 153-4, 158-9, 172-4 and *MEW*, I, 354-5, 360-1, 375-7. 'Comments on Mill', *MECW*, III, 212, 218, 220 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 446, 452, 454. *EPM*, *MECW*, III, 271ff. and *MEW*, Erg. I, 511ff.

20. Even as late as the *Theses on Feuerbach,* Marx speaks of the importance of " 'practical-critical' activity"; *MECW*, V, 3 and *MEW*, III, 5.

21. *CHPL, MECW*, III, 7-9, 39 and *MEW*, I, 205-8, 240-1. Marx may have been considering this position as early as the article on the 'Free Press', *MECW*, I, 173-4 and *MEW*, I, 69-70. Marx' humorous treatment of 'Fruitness' in the *HF* does not constitute a total rejection of the concept of essence but simply of the Hegelian concept of a single essence residing apart from existence and manifesting itself therein; see *HF, MECW*, IV, 57-61 and *MEW*, II, 60-3.

22. *MECW*, I, 18 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 9. In 1843 Marx begins to argue that existence can determine the development of essence; see 'Mosel Correspondent', *MECW*, I, 337 and *MEW*, I, 177. By 1844 it is human labor which determines this development.

23. 'Leading Article', *MECW*, I, 195 and *MEW*, I, 97. Marx' position here is close to the position that he will sharply criticize in the *CHPL*, i.e., making a predicate into a subject so that empirical reality does not stand on its own but is a result produced by spirit. See also *Dissertation*, *MECW*, I, 423-4 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 58-61. For further evidence of Marx' early idealism see *Dissertation, MECW*, I, 28, 436-9 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 260, 80-7. Also 'Free Press', *MECW*, I, 164-5 and *MEW*, I, 60-1.

24. 'Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law, Introduction' (*CHPLI*), *MECW*, III, 180-7 and *MEW*, I, 383-91. *EPM, MECW*, III, 313 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 553. *HF, MECW*, IV, 119 and *MEW*, II, 126.

25. In 'Communism and the *Augsburg Allgemeine Zeitung*', *MECW*, I, 220-1 and *MEW*, I, 108, Marx says: "practical attempts, even mass attempts, can be answered by cannon as soon as they become dangerous, whereas ideas, which have conquered our intellect and taken possession of our minds . . . are chains from which one cannot free oneself without a broken heart . . . " See also 'Free Press', *MECW*, I, 143, 164-5 and *MEW*, I, 39, 60-1. 'Estates in Prussia', *MECW*, I, 292 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 405. 'Letter from the

Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher', *MECW*, III, 142-5 and *MEW*, I, 344-6.

26. See P.J. Kain, *Schiller, Hegel, and Marx*, Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1982, Chapter 3.

27. 'Mosel Correspondent', *MECW*, I, 337 and *MEW*, I, 177. See also 'Leading Article', *MECW*, I, 201 and *MEW*, I, 103-4. 'Marx to Ruge on 13 March 1843', *MECW*, I, 400 and *MEW*, XXVII, 417. Also *EPM, MECW*, III, 303-5 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 543-6.

28. 'Free Press', *MECW*, I, 154, 162-3, 174 and *MEW*, I, 50, 58-9, 70. 'Debates on the Law on Thefts of Wood', *MECW*, I, 227 and *MEW*, I, 112. 'Divorce Bill', *MECW*, I, 308-10 and *MEW*, I, 149-51. Also *CHPL, MECW*, III, 14-5, 58, 119 and *MEW*, I, 213, 260, 325. In 1843 Marx rejects the concept of the state and of law implied here, but does retain the same method.

29. *EPM, MECW*, III, 270-1 (translation altered), 279-81, 291-2, 333 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 510-1, 520-1, 531-2, 574. Also *CHPL, MECW*, III, 91 and *MEW*, I, 295-6. See also Chapter 2, Section II below. Maguire argues that it is not important to Marx' argument to hold that estranged labor is the cause of private property; J. Maguire, *Marx's Paris Writings*, Dublin, Gil and Macmillan, 1972, p. 71. This is to fail to appreciate the role of the concept of essence in Marx' early thought. However, see S. Hook, *Revolution, Reform and Social Justice*, New York, New York University Press, 1975, p. 39. In the *Dissertation* Marx outlined a similar methodological approach for the history of philosophy. He distinguished between the essential consciousness of the philosopher, the philosopher's system, on the one hand, and the philosopher's manifest knowledge, the particular proofs, on the other hand - i.e., the essence from the appearance. The history of philosophy must proceed by developing the latter from the former; see *Dissertation, MECW*, I, 506 and MEW, Erg. I, 246-9.

30. *EPM, MECW*, III, 285-6, also 288-93, 303 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 524-6, 528-33, 543. Also *CHPL, MECW*, III, 27, 88-9 and *MEW*, I, 228, 293-4. Marx holds that essences come to have existence as categories which are then graspable and definable logical expressions of existence. Only in this way is the essence understandable and communicable. Marx says: "Value is the civil mode of existence of property, the logical expression through which it first becomes socially comprehensible and communicable." And later: "understanding is not only one-sided, a great and remarkable work, for only one-sidedness can extract the particular from the unorganized mass of the whole and give it shape. The character of a thing is a product of understanding. Each thing must isolate itself and become isolated in order to be

something. By confining each of the contents of the world in a stable definiteness and as it were solidifying the fluid essence of this content, understanding brings out the manifold diversity of the world . . . "; 'Wood Theft', *MECW*, I, 229, 233 and *MEW*, I, 114, 118. Marx' notion that categories evolve toward abstraction only really becomes clear later in the *Grundrisse*; see below, Chapter 3, Section I.

31. *EPM, MECW*, III, 290, 298-9 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 530, 538. *Dissertation, MECW*, I, 85-6 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 326-9.

32. *CHPLI, MECW*, III, 180-7 and *MEW*, I, 383-91.

33. *CHPL, MECW*, III, 88-9 and *MEW*, I, 292-3; 'Estates in Prussia', *MECW*, I, 295 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 408-9.

34. Marx says: "The subjective essence of private property ... is labour." See *EPM, MECW*, III, 290, also 292-4 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 530, 531-3.

35. We find an anticipation of this position in the *Dissertation*, where Marx says that the relation of thought to being becomes objective in the way a particular consciousness is related to the world; *Dissertation, MECW*, I, 42, also 85-6, 432, 506 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 274, 326-9, 76-7, 246-9.

36. K. Marx and F. Engels, *German Ideology (GI), MECW*, V, 35-7, 38-9, 45, 53-4, 236 and *MEW*, III, 25-7, 42-3, 31-2, 37-8, 217-8. See below, Chapter 2, Section I.

37. *CHPLI, MECW*, III, 175-87 and *MEW*, I, 378-91. See also *HF, MECW*, IV, 36-7 and *MEW*, II, 38. Contrast with *GI, MECW*, V, 193-7, also 36ff., 42ff., 48-9, 87-8 and *MEW*, III, 176-80, 26ff., 28ff., 34-5, 67-9.

38. *EPM, MECW*, III, 276, 298-9, 301 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 516, 538, 541. *Dissertation, MECW*, I, 52, 65 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 284, 297. *CHPL, MECW*, III, 89 and *MEW*, I, 293.

39. *EPM, MECW*, III, 277 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 517.

40. *EPM, MECW*, III, 336-7, also 299-300, 301-2 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 578-9, 539, 541-2. Compare with *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature (PN)*, trans. M.J. Petry, London, Allen & Unwin, 1970, III, 136-41, 147. For the German see *Sämtliche Werke*, IX, 621-8, 635.

41. *EPM, MECW*, III, 336-7 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 578-9. *HF, MECW*, IV, 21-2 and *MEW*, II, 21-2. Compare with L. Feuerbach, *Essence of Christianity*, trans. G. Eliot, New York, Harper & Row, 1957, pp. 4-5. For the German see *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. W. Bolin and F. Jodl, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, Frommann, 1959ff., VI, 5-6.

42. 'Comments on Mill', *MECW*, III, 227-8 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 462-3. *EPM, MECW*, III, 295-6, 305-6 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 535, 546.

43. *EPM, MECW*, III, 303-5, also 296, 298 and *MEW*, Erg. I,

543-6, 535, 537.

44. Schelling holds such a doctrine; see *System of Transcendental Idealism (1800)*, trans. P. Heath, Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1978, p. 6; for the German see *Schellings Werke*, ed. M. Schröter, München, Beck, 1965ff., II, 340-1.

45. *CHPLI, MECW*, III, 183 and *MEW*, I, 386. *EPM, MECW*, III, 298-9 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 537-9.

46. 'Wood Theft', *MECW*, I, 230 (translation altered), and *MEW*, I, 115. 'Free Press', *MECW*, I, 167 and *MEW*, I, 63. 'Ban on the *Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung*', *MECW*, I, 312-4 and *MEW*, I, 153-4. *EPM, MECW*, III, 295-6, 298 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 535, 537-8.

47. *EPM, MECW*, III, 298, 303-5 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 537-8, 543-6.

48. *EPM, MECW*, III, 301-2 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 540-2.

49. See also K. Marx, *Grundrisse* (*G*), trans. M. Nicolaus, London, Allen Lane, 1973, pp. 91-3; see *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (GKPÖ)*, Frankfurt, Europäische Verlagsanstalt, no date, pp. 12-5, for the German.

50. L. Kołakowski, 'Karl Marx and the Classical Definition of Truth' in *Toward a Marxist Humanism*, trans. J.Z. Peel, New York, Grove, 1968, pp. 43-8, 53. Jordan, pp. 27-31. Schmidt, pp. 32, 50, 56, 66, 97. However see Sánchez Vásquez, pp. 113, 116-9. Also *From Hegel to Marx*, pp. 260-6.

51. *Dissertation, MECW*, I, 39-40 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 271-2.

52. *Dissertation, MECW*, I, 63-5 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 294-7. Compare to Hegel's *PN*, I, 230-1 and *Sämtliche Werke*, IX, 79-81.

53. Marx does not discuss time explicitly in the *EPM* but does so implicitly. The passage at *EPM, MECW*, III, 304-6 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 545-6 (where Marx discusses the origin of the human being and rejects creation by a deity) bears a striking resemblance to an Addition in Hegel's *PN*, I, 206-8, also II, 177-8, also III, 17-8 and *Sämtliche Werke*, IX, 50-4, 385-6, 458-9. This Addition was included by Michelet in the Berlin edition of Hegel's *Werke* published in 1842. The Addition was not included in the 3rd edition (1830) of Hegel's *Encyclopädie* which is the text that Marx quotes at *EPM, MECW*, III, 343-4 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 585. Since it is not clear that Marx knew this Addition, though he could have, see also *PN*, I, 205, 209, 230-1 and *Sämtliche Werke*, IX, 9, 54-5, 79-80. For neither Hegel nor Marx is it possible in considering the finite, natural, and human world to speak of a creation or of a beginning of human beings or of nature. Hegel holds that finitude is inherently temporal. Every finite event arises out of a previous finite event (e.g., for Marx, a child from its parents). No first

beginning of the historical process can be located. For Marx such a question simply cannot be asked. For Hegel it cannot be asked from the finite standpoint, but it can from the standpoint of the Idea. This, however, requires abandoning altogether the realm of the temporal for the realm of the eternal (which is not temporal). Marx in rejecting this possibility (since essence is not external to nature) is thus holding that all reality is essentially temporal. He did not, however, hold this in the *Dissertation, MECW*, I, 63-5 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 294-7, with which the present passage in the *EPM* should be compared. Marx then adds in the *EPM* that the temporal development of nature and of the human being is due to human labor.

54. *EPM, MECW*, III, 303-5 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 543-6.

55. *EPM, MECW*, III, 337, 345-6 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 579, 587-8. *Dissertation, MECW*, I, 419-20 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 50-3.

56. *EPM, MECW*, III, 289, 305-6, 322 (translation altered), 346 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 529, 546, 562-3, 588.

57. *EPM, MECW*, III, 346 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 345. Feuerbach's position is quite close to Marx'; see 'Principles of the Philosophy of the Future' in *The Fiery Brook: Selected Writings of Ludwig Feuerbach*, trans. Z. Hanfi, Garden City, Anchor, 1972, pp. 207-8, 226 and *Sämtliche Werke*, II, 278-9, 298. Hegel too held that essences must appear; see *Logic of Hegel*, pp. 93-4, 239ff. and *Sämtliche Werke*, VIII, 133-5, 298ff.

58. *EPM, MECW*, III, 322 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 562-3. Also, higher socially developed needs are truer needs, for Marx, than basic needs. They indicate a higher development of the human essence; see *EPM, MECW*, III, 295-6, 302, 304, 307-8 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 535, 542, 544, 547-8. Also see *G*, p. 92 and *GKPO*, pp. 13-4.

59. 'Comments on Mill', *MECW*, III, 227-8 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 462-3. *HF, MECW*, IV, 36-7 and *MEW*, II, 37-8. We must say a word about the epistemological significance of alienation. Marx argues that alienation turns reality into a mere image and mere images into reality. For the alienated person who is poor and powerless, essence cannot be objectified in existence; the world cannot be transformed to suit this person's need. Thus this person's needs appear as mere images or illusions whose realization is impossible. On the other hand, the alienated person with money and the power it brings can easily realize the merest whims and caprices. Given such alienation, reality is not molded in accordance with the essential powers and needs of human beings, but according to their whims and caprices. Reality is turned into semblance and illusion; it becomes mere appearance unconnected to essence. See *EPM, MECW*, III, 325-6, also 302-3 and *MEW*, Erg. I,

566-7, 542-3; 'Comments on Mill', *MECW*, III, 225-8 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 460-3.

60. N. Rotenstreich, *Basic Problems of Marx's Philosophy*, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1965, pp. 31-2. Kołakowski, pp. 58-9. G. Petrović, *Marx in the mid-twentieth century*, Garden City, Doubleday, 1967, p. 191. Lukács, pp. 199-202. These authors reject a copy theory. See J. Hoffman, *Marxism and the Theory of Praxis*, New York, International, 1975, pp. 78ff., 82-7, who defends a reflection theory which is active and creative.

61. *TF, MECW*, V, 3 and *MEW*, III, 5. *HF, MECW*, IV, 7 and *MEW*, II, 7. *EPM, MECW*, III, 332, 338 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 573, 580.

62. Labor plays an important role in constituting an object of knowledge for Hegel. See 'Lord and Bondsman', 'Self-Conscious Individuals Associated as a Community of Animals', and 'Culture and its Realm of Reality' in the *Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. J.B. Baillie, New York, Harper & Row, 1967, pp. 229-40, 419-38, 514-48; for the German see *Phänomenologie des Geistes*, ed. J. Hoffmeister, Hamburg, Felix Meiner, 1952, pp. 141-50, 285-301, 350-76. However, Marx insists that for Hegel labor is understood as an activity of consciousness not as concrete material activity; *EPM, MECW*, III, 332-3 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 573-4.

63. *HF, MECW*, IV, 128-31 and *MEW*, II, 136-9. *TF, MECW*, V, 3-5 and *MEW*, III, 5-7.

64. *EPM, MECW*, III, 300-2 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 540-2. Such differentiation of sensitivities and capacities is in large part due to division of labor; *EPM, MECW*, III, 320-2 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 560-2. However, Marx admits that objects are refracted differently in different subjects; 'Comments on the Latest Prussian Censorship Instruction', *MECW*, I, 113 and *MEW*, I, 7.

65. Even language is a social product; *EPM, MECW*, III, 298-9 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 538-9.

66. As Petrović points out, even when Marx says: "Philosophers have merely interpreted the world, the point is to change it" (*TF, MECW*, V, 5 and *MEW*, III, 7), Marx is admitting that theoretical and reflective interpretation is possible though not desirable. See Petrović, p. 195. Also S. Avineri, *Karl Marx: Social and Political Thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970, p. 69.

67. Marx says: "But nature, too, taken abstractly, for itself - nature fixed in isolation from man - is nothing for man." See *EPM, MECW*, III, 345, also 346, 337 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 587-8, 579. Sánchez Vásquez, p. 119. Kołakowski, pp. 43-8. Jordan, pp. 27, 29,

31. Schmidt here differs from Lukács. On Lukács' reading of Marx, nature is merely a social category; it is dissolved into the historical process of its appropriation through praxis (see G. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. R. Livingstone, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1971, pp. 3-4, 19, 130, 202, but also xviff.). Schmidt rejects this view. Nature and its laws exist independently of human consciousness, and society is a category of nature as much as nature is a category of society (Schmidt, pp. 66, 70, 77). But despite the fact that nature exists in-itself, it is for Schmidt an unknown thing-in-itself. It can only be known in so far as it is transformed by human labor (Schmidt, pp. 50, 55-6, 66, 97).

68. *EPM, MECW*, III, 304-5 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 545-6.

69. *Dissertation, MECW*, I, 66, 419-20 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 298, 50-3. 'Estates in Prussia', *MECW*, I, 295 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 408-9. *CHPL, MECW*, III, 88-9 and *MEW*, I, 292-3. *EPM, MECW*, III, 303-6 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 543-6. On geognosy and meteorology see also Hegel's *PN*, II, 11, 42ff.; III, 17ff., 218 and *Sämtliche Werke*, IX, 155, 196ff., 458ff.

70. 'Wood Theft', *MECW*, I, 230 and *MEW*, I, 115. *EPM, MECW*, III, 303-4 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 544.

71. *EPM, MECW*, III, 336-7 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 578-9.

72. *EPM, MECW*, III, 300 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 540.

73. I. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. N. Kemp Smith, New York and Toronto, St. Martin's and Macmillan, 1965, A 112. J-Y. Calvez, *La pensée de Karl Marx*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 1956, pp. 378, 380.

74. See, for example, Engels, *LF*, pp. 208-9 and *MEW*, XXI, 276-7.

75. *GI, MECW*, V, 40 and *MEW*, III, 44.

76. Hegel argues that ordinary scientific knowledge of the development of the earth's crust is a lower sort of knowledge; *PN*, III, 21-2 and *Sämtliche Werke*, IX, 463-6. Schmidt argues that pre- or extra-human nature can only be known by extension from the already appropriated part of nature; Schmidt, p. 200 (note 30).

77. Marx also argued that we can grasp an essence only after it has achieved a relatively high point of development. Only then can our knowledge take on a general or abstract form. This is true for both natural and social phenomena. It follows that to understand adequately earlier stages of development we must first understand the final stages. (*EPM, MECW*, III, 278-80, 285-6, 288-9, 293-4 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 519-20, 524-6, 528-9, 533-4. 'Wood Theft', *MECW*, I, 229, 233 and *MEW*, I, 114, 118. *CHPL, MECW*, III, 23-4 and *MEW*, I, 224-5.

Dissertation, MECW, I, 85, 493 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 326-9, 218-9). Marx draws a similar conclusion explicitly in the *Grundrisse* (*G*, pp. 105-6 and *GKPO*, pp. 25-6).

In certain respects Marx' views here are like those that Hegel held in the Preface to the *Philosophy of Right* (trans. T. M. Knox, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1952, pp. 11-3; for the German see *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, ed. J. Hoffmeister, Hamburg, Felix Meiner, 1955, pp. 16-8). For Hegel, since the realization of the Idea is the realization of God in history, all we can do is look to the past in order to see how the present was produced. Philosophy is incapable of seeing into the future because that would amount to understanding God before God had been realized. However, Marx objects to this view in the *HF*. He says that Hegel's philosophy of history presupposes an antithesis between Spirit and matter, or God and the world. Moreover, Absolute Spirit, for Hegel, is only appropriately realized in philosophy: "the philosopher, however, is only the organ through which the maker of history, the Absolute Spirit, arrives at self-consciousness retrospectively after the movement has ended. The participation of the philosopher in history is reduced to this retrospective consciousness, for the real movement is accomplished by the Absolute Spirit unconsciously. Hence the philosopher appears on the scene *post festum*. Hegel is guilty of being... half-hearted... in that he lets the Absolute Spirit make history only in appearance. For since the Absolute Spirit becomes conscious of itself as the creative World Spirit only *post festum* in the philosopher, its making of history exists only in the consciousness, in the opinion and conception of the philosopher ..." (*HF, MECW,* IV, 85-6 and *MEW*, II, 89-90).

Marx objects to this opposition between God and the world. He objects to taking God or the essence as residing outside of existence and even more so to the notion that essence manifests itself in the world only as appearance and only in the consciousness of the philosopher. If this is the case, it is obvious why philosophy can only understand the past. But, for Marx, essence is embedded in existence. When essence realizes itself in existence it is not mere appearance and certainly not a mere appearance within consciousness. Rather, for Marx, the process of essence realizing itself in existence is a real process going on within existence and a process which eventually even becomes apparent to the senses. It is also a process in which existence is brought to its truth. It is just that this process must proceed to abstraction before we can grasp it. But once it has reached abstraction, we can understand its process of development. This is to say, for example, that before capitalism and the categories which express it have emerged we cannot understand

capitalism, which is not surprising. Once they have emerged, however, we can understand their process of development and we at least have the tools with which to understand future development.

Whether or not we are in a position to predict is another question. Marx himself suggests that this is not his task: "it is precisely the advantage of the new trend that we do not dogmatically anticipate the world, but only want to find the new world through the criticism of the old one. Hitherto philosophers have had the solution of all riddles lying in their writing-desks, and the stupid, exoteric world had only to open its mouth for the roast pigeons of absolute knowledge to fly into it . . . But, if constructing the future and settling everything for all times are not our affair, it is all the more clear what we have to accomplish at present: I am referring to the ruthless criticism of all that exists..." ('Marx to Ruge in Sept. 1843', *MECW*, III, 142 and *MEW*, I, 344). Moreover, I shall argue in Chapters 2 and 3 that even in the later writings Marx' method is not capable of and does not intend to predict.

CHAPTER TWO

1. K. Marx and F. Engels, *German Ideology (GI), Karl Marx Frederick Engels Collected Works* (*MECW*), New York, International, 1975ff., V, 236; for the German see *Marx Engels Werke (MEW)*, Berlin, Dietz, 1972ff., III, 217-8.

2. *GI, MECW*, V, 39 and *MEW*, III, 43. For an interesting argument that Marx abandons his concept of essence under the impact of Stirner's critique, see the doctoral dissertation of F. Gordon, *The Development of Marx's Conception of Human Nature*, University of California/San Diego, 1976, pp. 175-203.

3. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts (EPM), MECW*, III, 276 and *MEW*, Ergänzungsband I, 516. *GI, MECW*, V, 31 and *MEW*, III, 21. See also note 63 below.

4. Marx rejects a metaphysical concept of essence in many other passages; see *GI, MECW*, V, 58, 61, 99-100, 183-4, 215, 250, 293, 424-6, 430, 465, 511 and *MEW*, III, 42, 48, 83-4, 167, 196-7, 232, 275, 410-11, 417-8, 452-3, 500. Also 'Circular Against Kriege', *MECW*, VI, 45 and *MEW*, IV, 117. Also *Communist Manifesto, MECW*, VI, 511 and *MEW*, IV, 486. Marx also rejects the notion of an essence in nature; *GI, MECW*, V, 105 and *MEW*, III, 89.

5. *GI, MECW*, V, 54, 395n and *MEW*, III, 38, 379n. *Manifesto, MECW*, VI, 511 and *MEW*, IV, 486.

6. *GI, MECW*, V, 36n, 183-4 and *MEW*, III, 25-6n, 167.

7. *Theses on Feuerbach (TF), MECW*, V, 4 and *MEW*, III, 534. E. Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man*, New York, Ungar, 1973, p. 78. Also, J. McMurtry, *The Structure of Marx's World-View*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978, p. 30n.

8. *GI, MECW*, V, 432 and *MEW*, III, 417-8. *EPM, MECW*, III, 278-80 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 518-21. The view of the *EPM* is metaphysical, that of the *GI* is not. However, terms like 'human essence' and 'human nature' can be used in a very loose, non-metaphysical sense to do no more than refer to ordinary human characteristics or behavior. We must recognize that in the few instances

when Marx still uses these terms, he uses them in this way. See, for example, *GI, MECW,* V, 289, 437-8 and *MEW*, III, 270-1, 423. *Poverty of Philosophy (PP), MECW*, VI, 192 and *MEW*, IV, 160. *Capital (C)*, ed. F. Engels, New York, International, 1967, I, 609n and *MEW*, XXIII, 636-637n. Also *C*, III, 820 and *MEW*, XXV, 828.

9. *GI, MECW*, V, 49, 215, 486 and *MEW*, III, 35, 196-7, 475. *EPM, MECW*, III, 278-80 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 518-21.

10. *GI, MECW*, V, 46-9, 63-4 and *MEW*, III, 32-5, 65-6.

11. *GI, MECW*, V, 37 and *MEW*, III, 27.

12. *GI, MECW*, V, 31, 36-7, 39, 53-4 and *MEW*, III, 20, 26-7, 43, 37-8. *Manifesto, MECW*, VI, 503 and *MEW*, IV, 480.

13. *GI, MECW*, V, 54, 329, 437-8 and *MEW*, III, 38, 311, 423. For a recent discussion of the interaction between forces and relations of production see G.A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978. Cohen argues that the forces and relations of production are not mutually determining in the sense that the influence is bidirectional with equal weight on both sides (Cohen, pp. 134ff.). The forces of production must be taken as primary to a far greater extent than vice versa. I think that Cohen is basically correct here; the forces of production do become more powerful than the relations of production. For example, the forces can finally burst through the fetters imposed by the relations of production (see *Manifesto, MECW,* VI, 94-5 and *MEW*, IV, 467-8). In the Preface to the *Critique of Political Economy,* Marx argues that consciousness as well as social transformation are determined by the interaction between the forces and relations of production. Furthermore, Marx states quite clearly that the relations of production can serve to develop the forces of production or that they can fetter these forces (see *Critique of Political Economy (CPE)*, trans. S. Ryazanskaya, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1971, pp. 20-1 and *MEW*, XIII, 8-9). Obviously, it would only be possible for the forces of production to burst through the fetters imposed by the relations of production (and thus transform society) if the relations had first caused the forces to develop and then came to fetter them. Furthermore, in the *GI* Marx explicitly states that the relations of production (or social intercourse) can determine the forces of production (see *GI, MECW*, V, 437 and *MEW*, III, 423). Thus they do mutually determine each other, but the forces are finally more powerful than the relations of production.

14. *GI, MECW*, V, 329 and *MEW*, III, 311.

15. *GI, MECW*, V, 37 and *MEW*, III, 27. Also *CPE*, p. 21 and *MEW*, XIII, 9.

16. *TF, MECW*, V, 7 and *MEW*, III, 533-4. See for example

Z.A. Jordan, *The Evolution of Dialectical Materialism,* London and New York, Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1967, p. 33. Also Fromm, p. 22.

17. Marx says: "This conception of history thus relies on expounding the real process of production ... and comprehending the form of intercourse connected with and created by this mode of production ... and also explaining how all the different theoretical products and forms of consciousness, religion, philosophy, morality, etc., etc., arise from it, and tracing this process of their formation from that basis; thus the whole thing can, of course, be depicted in its totality (and therefore, too, the reciprocal action of these various sides on one another)." (*GI, MECW*, V, 53 and *MEW*, III, 37-8). This passage is often cited in support of the claim that in the *GI* Marx holds that ideas and material conditions mutually and equally determine each other. But the passage does not say this. All it says is that ideas and material conditions interact, which I fully admit. It does not say anything whatsoever about the nature of this interaction, and thus is perfectly compatible with other passages in the GI which, as we shall see, claim that this interaction is one in which material conditions determine consciousness.

18. *GI, MECW*, V, 54 and *MEW*, III, 38.

19. *GI, MECW*, V, 55-6 and *MEW*, III, 39-40.

20. *GI, MECW*, V, 195-7, 245-7, 329, 419-20 and *MEW*, III, 176-7, 227-9, 311, 405. Also 'Trial of the Rhenish Committee of Democrats', *MECW*, VIII, 327-8 and *MEW*, VI, 245.

21. *GI, MECW*, V, 54, also 41-5 and *MEW*, III, 38, 28-32.

22. *GI, MECW*, V, 44-5 and *MEW*, III, 30-2.

23. *GI, MECW*, V, 56, 379 and *MEW*, III, 40, 363. *Manifesto*, *MECW*, VI, 503 and *MEW*, IV, 480.

24. 'Engels to Block on 21-2 Sept. 1890' in *Marx Engels Selected Correspondence (SC)*, ed. S. Ryazanskaya, Moscow, Progress, 1955, pp. 417-8 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 463-4. 'Engels to Schmidt on 27 Oct. 1890', *SC*, pp. 421-5 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 490-5. 'Engels to Starkenburg on 25 Jan. 1894', *SC*, p. 467 and *MEW*, XXXIX, 206. Also see below, Chapter 4, Section I.

25. 'Engels to Block on 21-2 Sept. 1890', *SC*, pp. 418-9 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 464-5. 'Engels to Mehring on 14 July 1893', *SC*, p. 459 and *MEW*, XXXIX, 96.

26. *GI, MECW*, V, 36 and *MEW*, III, 26. The fact that material conditions and ideas appear upside down (as if the latter determined the former) is also the result of the historical development of material conditions (cf. *ibid.*)

27. *GI, MECW*, V, 78-9, 438 and *MEW*, III, 76, 424.

28. *GI, MECW*, V, 45 and *MEW*, III, 31-2 (my emphasis). For an explanation of ideas in advance of material conditions, see *GI, MECW,* V, 83, 193-7 and *MEW*, III, 72-3, 176-80. Marx even denies that psychological phenomena like fixation occur independently of material conditions; *GI, MECW*, V, 255 and *MEW*, III, 237.

29. *Manifesto, MECW*, VI, 497-8, 515 and *MEW*, IV, 474-5, 490. Also *PP, MECW*, VI, 177-8 and *MEW*, IV, 143. Also *GI, MECW,* V, 380-1 and *MEW*, III, 364. For a more active view of the Party, see *Manifesto, MECW*, VI, 518-9 and *MEW*, IV, 492-3.

30. *Manifesto, MECW,* VI, 489-96 and *MEW*, IV, 467-74. *GI, MECW*, V, 48-9, 52-3 and *MEW*, III, 34-5, 69-70.

31. N. Rotenstreich, *Basic Problems of Marx's Philosophy,* Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1965, pp. 133-4.

32. In the *Holy Family*, Marx examines this form of materialism. In particular, he mentions Duns Scotus' discussion of matter which thinks. However, Marx definitely does not endorse this view. In fact, he seems to reject it or at least is quite unsympathetic to it. He says: "in order to effect this miracle, he [Duns Scotus] took refuge in God's omnipotence, i.e., he made theology preach materialism". At another point he tells us that this is not the place to assess materialism (*Holy Family, MECW,* IV, 127, 131 and *MEW*, II, 135, 138). On the other hand, Engels does hold this form of materialism; see *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy (LF), Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy (MEPP)*, ed. L.S. Feuer, Garden City, Anchor, 1959, pp. 210-11, 215, 226 and *MEW*, XXI, 277-9, 281-2, 292-3. Also *Dialectics of Nature (DN)*, Trans. C. Dutt, New York, International, 1940, p. 25 and *MEW*, XX, 327. Also M. Cornforth, *Dialectical Materialism*, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1956, III, 12-4. Also J. Hoffman, *Marxism and the Theory of Praxis,* New York, International, 1976, pp. 72-3, 86, 97.

33. *GI, MECW*, V, 36 and *MEW*, III, 26. Marx does not argue that material conditions produce ideas but that humans themselves produce their own ideas and that this is determined by their social intercourse and production; see also *GI, MECW*, V, 289 and *MEW*, III, 270. Consider also the importance of ruling ideas; *GI, MECW*, V, 59 and *MEW*, III, 46.

34. Marx rejects utilitarianism and in particular its reduction of the significance of any relation, desire, or idea to the relation of utility; *GI, MECW*, V, 409ff. and *MEW*, III, 394ff.

35. *GI, MECW,* V, 51-2, 81, 83, 292, 426 and *MEW*, III, 37, 70, 72, 273, 411-2. This does not mean that all influence of material conditions on ideas will disappear, but simply that material conditions

will be understood and collectively controlled such that humans will be able consciously to determine these conditions.

36. Notice also that determinism is less in early and greater in later history; *GI, MECW,* V, 78-9, 438 and *MEW,* III, 76, 424.

37. *GI, MECW,* V, 59, 363 and *MEW,* III, 46, 347.

38. *GI, MECW,* V, 36, 59, 363 and *MEW,* III, 25, 46, 347.

39. *GI, MECW,* V, 51, 264 and *MEW,* III, 37, 247.

40. *GI, MECW,* V, 45, 78-9, 438 and *MEW,* III, 31-2, 76, 424. Thus, in the GI the relationship of ideas to material conditions is not like the relationship between the forces and relations of production. The latter, we have seen, do interact and mutually determine each other despite the fact that the forces are finally more powerful than the relations of production (see above, note 13 of this chapter). Ideas, it is true, are necessary factors that are not being eliminated or reduced to material conditions - in this sense they do interact with material conditions - but they do not (short of Communist society) determine material conditions - they do not interact with material conditions in the way that the relations affect the forces of production. Nor is it the case that material conditions simply predominate over ideas in the way that forces finally predominate over relations of production. Ideas never independently determine material conditions in the *GI* (prior to Communist society).

41. This is clearly implied later in the *Grundrisse (G),* trans. M. Nicolaus, London, Allen Lane, 1973, pp. 110-1; see *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (GKPO),* Frankfurt, Europäische Verlagsanstalt, no date, pp. 30-1, for the German.

42. This will be further discussed at the end of the present section.

43. *CPE,* p. 21 and *MEW,* XIII, 9.

44. *GI, MECW,* V, 53-4 and *MEW,* III, 37-8.

45. For example, see B. Ollman, *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society,* 2nd edition, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 59-60, 240. Also V. Venable, *Human Nature: The Marxian View,* New York, Knopf, 1945, p. 39.

46. 'Capital Punishment', *MECW,* XI, 497 and *MEW,* VIII, 509.

47. *Manifesto, MECW,* VI, 497-8, 519 and *MEW,* IV, 474-5, 492. *GI, MECW,* V, 48-9, 54, 87-8, 215, 438 and *MEW,* III, 34-5, 38-9, 67-8, 96-7, 424. For a discussion of the difference between understanding and prediction and their relation to necessary and sufficient conditions, see below, Chapter 3, note 82.

48. It is not clear in the Preface itself whether we should take the tracing of ideas from material conditions to be just very difficult in

practice or rather theoretically impossible because ideas are not in fact very strictly determined. I think that Marx is holding the latter position because in the *Grundrisse* he had already moved in this direction; for example, he denied, contrary to the *GI*, that the scope and quality of ideas are directly determined by the scope and universality of material conditions; compare *GI, MECW*, V, 51, 263-4 and *MEW*, III, 37, 246-7 with *G*, pp. 110-1 and *GKPO*, pp. 30-1. Also see below, Chapter 3, Section III.

49. See also *PP, MECW*, VI, 177-8 and *MEW*, IV, 143.

50. *EPM, MECW*, III, 270-1, 279-80 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 510, 520.

51. The role of praxis will be discussed below in Section III of this chapter.

52. *GI, MECW*, V, 37, also see 53-4 and *MEW*, III, 27, 37-8.

53. *GI, MECW*, V, 36-7, 92 and *MEW*, III, 26-7, 539.

54. *PP, MECW*, VI, 162-9, 197 and *MEW*, IV, 126-34, 165. *GI, MECW*, V, 37 and *MEW*, III, 27.

55. *PP, MECW*, VI, 170 and *MEW*, IV, 134-5.

56. *Manifesto, MECW*, VI, 511-2, 514-5 and *MEW*, IV, 486-7, 489-91.

57. I am not suggesting that it would have been impossible for Marx to argue for the compatibility of strict determinism and analysis. Indeed modern philosophers of science have tried to work out similar problems: see, for example, A. Grünbaum, 'Causality and the Science of Human Behavior' in *Readings in the Philosophy of Science*, ed. H. Feigl and M. Brodbeck, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1953, pp. 766-77, esp. 775-6. I am simply pointing out that Marx in fact did not move in this direction.

58. *C*, I, 8, 19, 37-8, 47, 57-8, 75, 95 and *MEW*, XXIII, 12, 27, 51-3, 62, 71-2, 89-90, 110. Also *G*, pp. 85-8, 100-8 and *GKPO*, pp. 6-10, 21-9. See also *C*, I, 154, 160-4, 193-5, 236, 539-40, 568 and *MEW*, XXIII, 169, 175-9, 208-9, 251, 562, 593.

59. *C*, III, 25, 43, 153, 155-9, 174, 178, 195-6, 208 and *MEW*, XXV, 33, 53, 162, 165-9, 183, 187, 205-6, 219. *G*, pp. 137-8 and *GKPO*, pp. 55-7.

60. *C*, I, 307 and *MEW*, XXIII, 325. *C*, III, 47-8 and *MEW*, XXV, 57-8. Also see Engels' 'Supplement' in *C*, III, 894ff. and *MEW*, XXV, 903ff.

61. *Wage-Labour and Capital, MECW*, IX, 201, 205-9, 212-4 and *MEW*, VI, 399, 402-6, 409-11. 'Competition' as well as 'supply and demand' are, of course, concepts and thus abstractions. But they are the sorts of concepts or abstractions permitted by the method of the *GI*. They merely sum up the results of empirical study. After all, they

are the sorts of concepts which even agents of production can gain through experience of the surface phenomena of society. On the other hand, the concept of value in *Capital*, as we shall see, is a concept grasped only by science, and science grasps a reality beneath surface experience. It grasps an essence, though of a different sort than in 1844; see below, Chapter 3, Section VI.

62. *C*, III, 37, 43, 158, 168, 179, 180-1, 190-1 and *MEW*, XXV, 47, 53, 167, 177-8, 188, 190, 200-1. Also *C*, I, 71ff., 102, 160-5 and *MEW*, XXIII, 85ff., 117, 175-8. Also *C*, III, 39, 41-3 and *MEW*, XXV, 49, 51-3.

63. *GI, MECW*, V, 31, 43-4 and *MEW*, III, 20-1, 29-31. Marx is not holding that socio-economic activity rather than thought first distinguishes humans from animals - he decided to cross out this claim in the final manuscript. In other words, the characteristics which distinguish humans from animals are roughly the same in the *EPM* and the *GI*. In the *GI* humans can consciously relate themselves to things; in the *EPM* they can make their practical activity (labor) the object of their will and consciousness (*EPM, MECW*, III, 276 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 516). In the *EPM* this distinguishing characteristic is taken to be the manifestation of the human essence. In the *GI*, it is not.

64. Though crossed out in the final manuscript, see *GI, MECW*, V, 255-6n and *MEW*, III, 238-9n. Also *GI, MECW*, V, 262-3 and *MEW*, III, 245-6. Furthermore, the human ego, while certainly conditioned by society, nevertheless seems to be a natural and irreducible given; *GI, MECW*, V, 240, 434 and *MEW*, III, 222, 419. Even further, the division of labor has its original natural basis in the difference between the sexes and in differences in strength; *GI, MECW*, V, 44 and *MEW*, III, 31.

65. *GI, MECW*, V, 393-4 and *MEW*, III, 377-8. Thus Engels' view that "if a Napoleon had been lacking another would have filled the place" ('Engels to Starkenburg on 25 Jan. 1894', *SC*, p. 467 and *MEW*, XXXIX, 206-7), does not follow from Marx' position in the *GI*. One must have both the potentiality to become a Napoleon or a Raphael as well as the material conditions which allow the potentiality to unfold. However, for an example of Marx' tendency in Engels' direction, see *GI, MECW*, V, 424-5 and *MEW*, III, 410. In the *GI* there are passages which tend toward explaining and deriving consciousness entirely from material conditions. Most of them, however, were crossed out in the final manuscript. See, for example, *GI, MECW*, V, 31n and *MEW*, III, 20-1n.

66. This is Engels' view; *DN*, pp. 279ff. and *MEW*, XX, 444ff. In this regard Engels' view is Lamarckian more than Darwinian. Marx' is not. However, Marx' earlier views (see above, Chapter 1,

Section IVb) seemed to contain Lamarckian elements.

67. *EPM, MECW*, III, 298, 303-5 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 537-8, 543-6.

68. *GI, MECW*, V, 41-4 and *MEW*, III, 28-31.

69. *GI, MECW*, V, 45, 51, 263-4 and *MEW*, III, 31-2, 37, 246-7.

70. *GI, MECW*, V, 31-2, 39-40, 58 (this is a newly discovered passage and thus not to be found in *MEW*), 255-6, 262-3, 295 and *MEW*, III, 21, 43-4 (...), 237-9, 245-6, 276-7.

71. *GI, MECW*, V, 31, 58 (this newly discovered passage is not to be found in *MEW*) and *MEW*, III, 21, (...). Cohen has a very good discussion of this and related matters; see Cohen, pp. 88-105.

72. Jordan, pp. 27-31. Lukács and Schmidt differ on this matter. Lukács argues that nature is merely a social category (G. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. R. Livingstone, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1970, pp. 3-4, 19, 130, 202). Schmidt admits that nature exists independently in-itself but holds that nature untransformed by human labor is an unknown thing-in-itself (A. Schmidt, *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, trans. B. Fowkes, London, NLB, 1971, pp. 35, 66, 70, 77). Also see Chapter 1, note 67.

73. *GI, MECW*, V, 81 and *MEW*, III, 70-1.

74. *EPM, MECW*, III, 322 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 562-3.

75. Fichte's non-self or impulse is posited within the self. Thus it ought be be known in as much as we seek to establish the identity of the self and the non-self. But, as Hegel argues, this is an infinite task never to be accomplished; see G.W. F. Hegel, *The Logic of Hegel,* trans. W. Wallace, London, Oxford University Press, 1904, pp. 119-20; for the German see *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. H. Glockner, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, Fromman, 1964ff., VIII, 162-3. Also *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, trans. E.S. Haldane and F.H. Simson, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1955, III, 481-99 *passim*; for the German see *Sämtliche Werke*, XIX, 613-35 *passim.*

76. *GI, MECW*, V, 264n, 292 and *MEW*, III, 247n, 273.

77. *GI, MECW*, V, 273-4 and *MEW*, III, 254-5.

78. *GI, MECW*, V, 426, 44, 36, 231, 446 and *MEW*, III, 411-2, 30-1, 26, 212-3, 432. In the future, however, even language will be brought under the control of human beings.

79. *GI, MECW*, V, 363, 446-9 and *MEW*, III, 347, 432-5.

80. *GI, MECW*, V, 295-6, 326, 430, 446-9 and *MEW*, III, 276-7, 308, 415-6, 432-5. *TF, MECW*, V, 3 and *MEW*, III, 533. S. Hook, *Toward an Understanding of Karl Marx*, London, Gallancz, 1933, pp. 37-8.

81. On Marx' naturalism, see Jordan, pp. 13-4, 26, 52-3.

Jordan, however, appears to think that the determination of ideas by material conditions is incompatible with naturalism, that it is only a doctrine of traditional materialism; Jordan, pp. 32-3. I cannot see that this is so.

82. *GI, MECW,* V, 255, 262-3 and *MEW*, III, 237-8, 245-6.

83. *GI, MECW*, V, 39 and *MEW*, III, 43.

84. For example, Schmidt, pp. 56, 60, 120-1. Jordan, pp. 27-31, 34.

85. *GI, MECW*, V, 31 and *MEW*, III, 20-1.

86. In the *Grundrisse*, Marx rejects Hegel's view that thought produces the real world and, in fact, he denies that theory transforms its object at all. The object "retains its autonomous existence outside the head just as before". (*G*, pp. 101-2 and *GKPO*, p. 22). In *Capital*, Marx also claims that the theoretical determination of value "in no way alters the mode in which that determination takes place." (*C*, I, 75 and *MEW*, XXIII, 89). It is true that the method of the *Grundrisse* involves a form of constitution; but, as we shall see (in Chapter 3, Sections I and VI), this is a very different form of constitution than we have been discussing up to now. It will not transform the real object.

87. *GI, MECW*, V, 30, 44-5, 54, 193-7 and *MEW*, III, 20, 30-2, 38, 176-9. Also Marx rejects the notion of a construction of the ego; *GI, MECW*, V, 240 and *MEW*, III, 222. Even powerful ruling ideas which do influence other ideas do not transform reality. They are always judged against reality and insofar as they diverge from it are illusions; *GI, MECW,* V, 59-60 and *MEW*, III, 46-7. Marx also denies that psychological fixation occurs independently of determination by material conditions; *GI, MECW*, V, 255 and *MEW*, III, 237.

88. For example, *GI, MECW*, V, 91 and *MEW*, III, 62-3.

89. *EPM, MECW*, III, 301-2, 335-7 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 541-2, 576-9.

90. *GI, MECW*, V, 35-7, 295, 326, 430, 447 and *MEW*, III, 25-7, 276-7, 308, 415, 432-3.

91. See *GI, MECW*, V, 295 and *MEW*, III, 276-7.

92. *TF, MECW,* V, 3 and *MEW*, III, 533. Schmidt, pp. 118-9.

93. *GI, MECW*, V, 40, 44 and *MEW*, III, 43-4, 30-1.

94. *GI, MECW*, V, 37 and *MEW*, III, 27.

95. This is Engels' view, *LF*, pp. 207-8, 226 and *MEW*, XXI, 275-6, 292-3. And Marx holds this in *C*, I, 215 and *MEW*, XXIII, 229.

96. *GI, MECW,* V, 40-1 and *MEW*, III, 43-5.

97. *GI, MECW,* V, 31, 40, 58 (this newly discovered passage is not to be found in *MEW*), 286 and *MEW*, III, 20-1, 43-4, (...), 267. However, in the *GI* Marx seems to hold that most of nature has been

radically transformed historically and that very little untransformed nature remains. How we can come to know prehuman nature under these conditions is not explained. In the *Grundrisse* Marx will argue that an abstract theoretical structure able to grasp the high point of a historical development is necessary to understand the earlier development (*G*, pp. 100-8, esp. 105 and *GKPO*, pp. 21-9, esp. 26), and in *Capital* Marx will de-emphasize the degree to which nature has been transformed and admit that a great deal of untransformed nature still remains (*C*, I, 179-84 and *MEW*, XXIII, 194-7).

98. *GI, MECW*, V, 40-1 and *MEW*, III, 43-5.

99. *Ibid.*

100. *GI, MECW*, V, 39, 105, 409-10, 473 and *MEW*, III, 42-3, 89, 394-5, 460-1.

101. *GI, MECW*, V, 58 (this newly discovered passage is not to be found in *MEW*), also 39 and *MEW*, III, (...), 42-3.

102. *GI, MECW*, V, 31n and *MEW*, III, 21n .

103. *GI, MECW*, V, 31 and *MEW*, III, 21.

CHAPTER THREE

1. K. Marx, *Capital (C)*, ed. F. Engels, New York, International, 1967, I, 19; for the German see *Marx Engels Werke (MEW)*, Berlin, Dietz, 1972ff., XXIII, 27.

2. Marx says: "All epochs of production have certain common traits, common characteristics . . . this common element sifted out by comparison, is itself segmented many times over and splits into different determinations. Some determinations belong to all epochs, others to only a few." See K. Marx, *Grundrisse (G)*, trans. M. Nicolaus, London, Allen Lane, 1973, pp. 85, also 88; for the German see *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (GKPO)*, Frankfurt, Europäische Verlagsanstalt, no date, pp. 7, 10.

3. *G*, pp. 100-1, also 85 and *GKPO*, pp. 21-22, 27.

4. *C*, I, 7-8 and *MEW*, XXIII, 11-2. Marx also says that Hegel was correct to begin the *Philosophy of Right* with the simple abstract category of possession; see *G*, p. 102 and *GKPO*, p. 22.

5. *G*, pp. 100-1 and *GKPO*, pp. 21-2. *C*, I, 508 and *MEW*, XXIII, 531.

6. *G*, pp. 101, 106-8 and *GKPO*, pp. 22, 26-9. *C*, I, 19, 75 and *MEW*, XXIII, 27, 89.

7. K. Marx, *The Poverty of Philosophy* in *Karl Marx Frederick Engels Collected Works (MECW)*, New York, International, 1975ff., VI, 167 and *MEW*, IV, 131. *German Ideology, (GI)* in *MECW*, V, 31, 36-7, 53-4 and *MEW*, III, 20, 26-7. 37-8. *G*, pp. 107-8 and *GKPO*, p. 28. Despite this quote concerning the difference between historical and structural methods from the *Poverty of Philosophy*, this text was included with the material discussed in Chapter 2. This was possible because Marx did not develop his concept of structure until the *Grundrisse*. To have done so in the *Poverty of Philosophy* would have involved undermining the historical method of the *GI*, which it seems Marx was not ready to do.

8. *G*, pp. 106-8, 278, 328-9 and *GKPO*, pp. 26-9, 189, 234-5. *C*, III, 327-8 and *MEW*, XXV, 339-40.

9. *G*, pp. 102-7 and *GKPO*, pp. 23-8. *C*, II, 14-6 and *MEW*, XXIV, 22-4. Yet at the same time Engels argues that for Marx the logical method is simply the historical method stripped of its historical form; see F. Engels, 'Karl Marx: *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*' in *Critique of Political Economy (CPE)*, trans. S. Ryasanskaya, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1971, p. 225 and *MEW*, XIII, 475. This is to overlook totally the role of theoretical reconstruction of the concrete for thought (this will be discussed below; see Chapter 4, Section II). Althusser has a great deal, much of it very interesting, to say about the notion of conceptual revolution, see L.

Althusser and E. Balibar, *Reading Capital*, trans. B. Brewster, London, NLB, 1970, pp. 147-57. Where I disagree with Althusser is in his application of this model to Marx' own development.

10. *G*, pp. 101-5, 107, 449-50, 460-1 and *GKPO*, pp. 22-5, 27, 353-4, 364-5. Marx also tells us that only at earlier, lower stages of production do commodities exchange at their values. At higher stages they exchange at their price of production. In general, simple categories, which can only be grasped abstractly and theoretically in their full intensity at the later and higher stage, function in their pure and predominant form only at the earlier stage (*C*, III, 177 and *MEW*, XXV, 186. *C*, I, 59-60 and *MEW*, XXIII, 73-4). Through history the simple categories become more abstract, subordinate to a social structure, and grasp more complex relations of a developed whole; in this sense only, history parallels method which also moves from simple categories to their complex connection (*G*, p. 102 and *GKPO*, p. 23). This does not in any way imply that the sequence in which the categories are organized is the sequence in which they occurred historically.

11. *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts (EPM)* in *MECW*, III, 270-1, 279-81, 293, 298-9, 303-4, 333 and *MEW*, Ergänzungsband, I, 510-11, 520-1, 533, 538, 543-4, 574. Also see above, Chapter I, Section III. *GI*, *MECW*, V, 31, 36-7, 53-4 and *MEW*, III, 20, 26-7, 37-8. Also see above, Chapter 2, Section II.

12. *For Marx*, trans. B. Brewster, New York, Pantheon, 1969, pp. 13, 34-5, 198-9. Gouldner argues that the *Grundrisse* and *Capital* involve the application of the same paradigm which Marx had established by 1848; see A. Gouldner, *The Two Marxisms*, New York, Seabury, 1980, pp. 291-2. Consequently, Gouldner rejects the notion that there are shifts in Marx' thought. Instead there are only contradictions (Gouldner, pp. 252-3).

13. D. Sayer, *Marx's Method*, Sussex, Harvester, 1979, pp. 98, also 81. A similar view is held by R. Echeverria, 'Critique of Marx's 1857 Introduction', *Economy and Society*, VII (1978), pp. 354-6.

14. *G*, pp. 101-3 and *GKPO*, pp. 21-4. Also see note 10 above.

15. *G*, p. 103 and *GKPO*, p. 24.

16. *G*, pp. 104-7 and *GKPO*, pp. 24-7.

17. *C*, I, 61, 79 and *MEW*, XXIII, 76, 93. *C*, III, 177 and *MEW*, XXV, 182. Engels also makes this claim; see *C*, III, 14 and *MEW*, XXV, 20.

18. *C*, I, 44n and *MEW*, XXIII, 59n.

19. *C*, I, 57, 69-70 and *MEW*, XXIII, 72, 83-4. Also *G*, pp. 201-3, 215 and *GKPO*, pp. 115-7, 129.

20. *C*, I, 82 and *MEW*, XXIII, 97.

21. *C*, I, 59-60 and *MEW*, XXIII, 73-4.

22. Furthermore, I cannot agree with Sayer's view that we find in the *Grundrisse* only a discussion of Marx' method of presentation but not his method of inquiry, the latter of which can only be studied in *Capital* (Sayer, p. 94). In *Capital*, Marx says: "Of course the method of presentation [*Darstellungsweise*] must differ in form from that of inquiry. The latter has to appropriate the material in detail, to analyze its different forms of development, to trace out their inner connexion. Only after this work is done, can the actual movement be adequately presented [*dargestellt*]." (C, I, 19 [translation altered] and *MEW*, XXIII, 27). The method of inquiry appropriates the material, analyses it, and traces out inner connections. It certainly seems that the *Grundrisse*, as we have described it above, is explaining how to carry out the method of inquiry. The reconstruction of the concrete for thought which begins with categories and seeks their interconnection is the method of inquiry. This is what we find in Volume I of *Capital*. Only after we have this concrete for thought can we adequately present and empirically study the movement of the actual concrete. It is the task of Volume III, Marx tells us, to "locate and present [*darzustellen*]" this movement. (*C*, III, 25 [translation altered] and *MEW*, XXV, 33). Again I can see no significant difference between *Capital* and the *Grundrisse* here.

23. *G*, p. 100 and *GKPO*, p. 21.

24. *C*, II, 2-3 and *MEW*, XXIV, 8. For passages in Volume III, which suggest that Marx was working both from and to Volume I, see *C*, III, 47-8, 327-8, 337 and *MEW*, XXV, 57-8, 339-40, 349.

25. See *C*, III, 175-7 and *MEW*, XXV, 184-6.

26. On this matter see also R. Rosdolsky, *The Making of Marx's Capital*, trans. P. Burgess, London, Pluto, 1977, pp. 171-3.

27. Thus it would seem that Volume III - not just the movement beginning in Volume I from the simple categories toward the concrete - is part of the method of inquiry. Volume III, of course, is also the final presentation of the movement of the empirical concrete. Nevertheless, there is still no significant difference between the relationship of the two methods in *Capital* as compared to the *Grundrisse*. Both methods were discussed in the *Grundrisse*.

28. Sayer also argues that Marx begins with the empirical and phenomenal and seeks to find the essence (or underlying conditions) which explain it (Sayer, pp. 109, 115ff.). This is true, but this process does not properly appear in the transition from Volume I to Volume III, where we find a movement from essence to phenomena (see Section VI of this chapter); it appears in the transition from Volume III to Volume I. Sayer tries to force Marx' method of inquiry to fit Hanson's model of retroduction. Retroduction is a working backwards from the phenomena to an essence, paradigm, or Gestalt that will make the data fall into a pattern (see N.R. Hanson, *Patterns of Discovery*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1958, Chapter 4, esp. pp.

85-92). This is simply not what we see in the movement from Volume I to Volume III. I can agree with Sayer that something like Hanson's model of retroduction must have occurred in Marx' original move from the writing of Volume I to the writing of Volume III and then back again to Volume I. But the movement actually played out for us in Volume I is not the process of discovery; it is the properly scientific method of actually laying out, constructing, and arguing for an essence which will finally explain surface phenomena. For a discussion of shifts, in *Capital*, away from the plan or outline of the *Grundrisse*, see Rosdolsky, pp. 10-56.

29. *C*, I, 20 and *MEW*, XXIII, 27.

30. 'Marx to Engels on 14 Jan. 1858', in *Marx Engels Selected Correspondence (SC)*, Moscow, Progress, 1965, p. 100 and MEW, XXIX, 260.

31. *Marx's Grundrisse*, trans. with Introduction by D. McLellan, London, Macmillan, 1971, p. 13.

32. G.W.F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Mind (PM)*, trans. J.B. Baillie, New York, Harper & Row, 1967, pp. 378, also 379; for the German see *Phänomenologie des Geistes (PG)*, ed. J. Hoffmeister, Hamburg, Felix Meiner, 1952, pp. 258, 259.

33. For a similar passage in the *Logic*, which however is not at all as clear, see *Science of Logic*, trans. A.V. Miller, London, Allen & Unwin, 1969, p. 588; for the German see *Wissenschaft der Logik*, ed. G. Lasson, Hamburg, Felix Meiner, 1971, II, 226. On this matter, also see the discussion of L. Colletti, *Marxism and Hegel*, trans. L. Garner, London, NLB, 1973, pp. 114ff.

34. *PM*, pp. 692-3 and *PG*, p. 479.

35. *Logic*, pp. 48-9 and *Logik*, I, p. 29-30.

36. *PM*, pp. 68 and *PG*, p. 10.

37. *PM*, p. 689 and *PG*, p. 476.

38. *Ibid.*

39. *PM*, pp. 688-90 and *PG*, pp. 476-7.

40. *PM*, pp. 800-1 and *PG*, pp. 558-9.

41. *PM*, pp. 685-6 and *PG*, pp. 473-4.

42. *PM*, p. 691 and *PG*, p. 478.

43. *PM*, pp. 90-1, 801 and *PG*, pp. 27-8, 599.

44. *CPE*, pp. 20-1 and *MEW*, XIII, 8-9.

45. *G*, pp. 158, 162 and *GKPO*, pp. 75, 79. *C*, I, 78-80 and *MEW*, XXIII, 92-4.

46. *G*, pp. 109-11 and *GKPO*, pp. 29-31. As late as 1853 in an article on British rule in India Marx echoes the view of the *German Ideology*; he argues that lower forms of society limit and enslave the mind while higher forms liberate it; see *Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd edition, ed. R.C. Tucker, New York, Norton, 1978, p. 658 and *MEW*, IX, 132-3. *GI*, *MECW*, V, 51, 263-4 and *MEW*, III, 37, 246-7. J. McMurtry incorrectly takes this to be Marx' general view even in the

Grundrisse; see *Structure of Marx's World-View,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978, pp. 40ff., 221.

47. *CPE*, p. 21 and *MEW*, XIII, 9. It is true that in this passage the term 'determined' [*konstatierenden*] is not being used as a causal verb, as when one says that material conditions 'determine' society. Instead it is used to mean that material conditions can be determined in the sense of 'understood'. Nevertheless, as I argued in Chapter 2, if science is to be able to understand social processes and is to be able to generalize about them, then these processes will have to be determined to some extent in a causal fashion. They could not be random, irregular, or inconsistent. Thus, if certain phenomena, like forms of consciousness, cannot be determined with scientific precision, this suggests either that they are not strictly determined in a causal fashion or that they are so determined but that there is some practical difficulty which prohibits us from discovering this determinism precisely. That the former and not the latter is Marx' position is suggested by what Marx says about his method and about Greek art in the *Grundrisse.*

48. *G*, p. 99 and *GKPO*, p. 20. B. Ollman, *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, 2nd edition, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1976, pp. 10-11, 17. Gould's critique of Ollman is a good one. For Ollman, individuals or things are constituted by their relations. Gould persuasively argues that for Marx individuals or things exist independently and then enter into relations; see C. Gould, *Marx's Social Ontology*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1978, pp. 38, 40, 87, 184 (note 22). I myself will argue (in Section V of this chapter) that for Marx natural objects exist independently, then enter into, and are transformed by, social relations. I might add, however, that Gould like Ollman does not think that for Marx material conditions predominate in determining individuals or consciousness (Gould, pp. 91-2).

49. *G*, pp. 91-3 and *GKPO*, pp. 12-5.

50. *C*, III, 327-8 and *MEW*, XXV, 339-40.

51. Marx now agrees with the view at least sketched in the *EPM* that only when categories are fully developed to abstraction can we understand a given period. This was rejected in the *GI* . (See Chapter 1, Section III and Chapter 2, Section II). On the other hand, Marx continues to agree with the view of the *GI* that material conditions actually cause the development of society from one stage to the next. But he now holds, in opposition to the *EPM*, that the categories of the earlier stage differ somewhat from those of the later and that the earlier stage is incapable of giving rise to the categories that could lead to an explanation of, let alone assist, the development to the later stage.

52. If society's present course of development is understood, then a political party would be in the position to work out a strategy to hasten this development and perhaps to "shorten and lessen the birthpangs" of a new emerging society (*C*, I, 10 and *MEW*, XXIII,

15-6). Understanding and strategy rather than prediction of the inevitable was also the model of the *Manifesto* (*MECW*, VI, 497-8, 519 and *MEW*, IV, 474-5, 492. See also Chapter 2, Section II). Furthermore, Marx writes that "World history would indeed be easy to make if the struggle were taken up only on the condition of infallibly favorable chances." Marx goes on to emphasize the role of accident in history ('Marx to Kugelmann on 17 April 1871' in *SC*, p. 264 and *MEW*, XXXIII, 209). It would also seem to follow from the views of the *Grundrisse* that political praxis would to some extent be blind concerning the future. Given the fact that categories are bound to a particular period, at least scientific accuracy would be impossible in determining future development (in a different period involving transformed categories and a transformed structure). On the other hand, this blindness would be offset by the fact that as socialism progressively established itself, it would be the case that human beings would increasingly be able consciously and collectively to determine their social relations themselves. We will also find, as we proceed, that there will be another sense in which science will not be necessary under socialism (see below, Section VIII of this chapter).

53. Marx says that productive activity, constantly repeated, slowly impresses upon human beings the properties of things which satisfy their needs and finally these things are given a linguistic designation and become ideas. Even logical categories arise in this way. This is not to say that material conditions cause or produce concepts in us, but merely that the content of the concepts which we produce ourselves is first given in and through social praxis and then later as a theoretical expression of this praxis; see 'Notes on Adolph Wagner' in *Texts on Method*, trans. T. Carver, New York, Barnes and Noble, 1975, pp. 190-1 and *MEW*, XIX, 362-4. Also 'Marx to Engels on 25 March 1868', *SC*, p. 202 and *MEW*, XXXII, 52.

54. *CPE*, p. 21 and *MEW*, XIII, 9.

55. *G*, p. 101 (my emphasis) and *GKPO*, p. 22. *C*, I, 75, also 74 and *MEW*, XXIII, 89, 88.

56. M. Rader, *Marx's Interpretation of History*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1979.

57. For an example of the latter view, see Ollman, pp. 8-17.

58. *CPE*, p. 20 and *MEW*, XIII, 8.

59. *CPE*, pp. 20-1 and *MEW*, XIII, 8-9.

60. *CPE*, p. 19 and *MEW*, XIII, 7.

61. *CPE*, p. 21 and *MEW*, XIII, 9.

62. To some extent my views are compatible with Rader's. Though he does not make the claim, the fundamentalist base-superstructure model comes close to characterizing the views found in the *GI*. This model is at odds with both the dialectical base-superstructure model and the organic totality model which characterize Marx' later thought. The Preface, while it does speak of

base and superstructure is not, as Rader himself argues, the fundamentalist but the dialectical version in which base and superstructure interact and mutually determine each other, and for Rader the dialectical base-superstructure and the organic totality models are not in contradiction; rather the latter is a refinement of the former (Rader, pp. 17-8, 56). If this is accepted, then we no longer have a series of waverings between contradictory models but a shift away from the fundamentalist model in the *GI* to the second set of models in the later writings. Rader also argues that the organic totality model understands relations as hierarchically structured so that material conditions are weighted and that this model preserves the strengths of the dialectical base-superstructure model (Rader, pp. 56, 75ff.).

63. In his review of Rader's book, Adamson does not agree that the dialectical base-superstructure model is consistent with the organic totality model. He points out that Rader himself admits that the former model could adopt a Humean type of causal explanation but that the latter would have to reject this in favor of Althusser's notion of structural causation. (W. Adamson, 'Review of Cohen, Shaw, and Rader', *History and Theory*, XIX [1980], pp. 190-1). I do not want to disagree with this. I admit that the two models are different and not perfectly consistent. But this is not enough to give us two Marxes.

64. W. Adamson, 'Marx's Four Histories: An Approach to his Intellectual Development', *History and Theory*, XX (1981), p. 399.

65. *C*, I, 7 and *MEW*, XXIII, 11.

66. When Adamson suggests that the Preface rejects the method of 1857 which began with abstractions and generalizations prior to empirical investigation, he may have in mind Marx' statement in the Preface which says that we must "ascend from the particular to the general". (*CPE*, p. 19 and *MEW*, XIII, 8). Does this imply a rejection of the method of 1857 which moves from the abstract to the concrete? I do not think so. The concepts with which the *Critique of Political Economy* and *Capital* begin (e.g., the commodity) are particulars. They are certainly particular with respect to the generality of capitalist society as a whole which is only reached at the end of the study. But at the same time these concepts are abstractions. They have been abstracted from the totality of the actual concrete and allow us to reconstruct the concrete for thought. The method moves from the particular and abstract to the general and concrete. Also see below, the end of Section VII of this chapter.

67. *CPE*, p. 20 and *MEW*, XIII, 8.

68. *C*, I, 372n and *MEW*, XXIII, 392-3.

69. Marx says: "An abstract law of population exists for plants and animals only, and in so far as man has not interfered with them." See *C*, I, 632 and *MEW*, XXIII, 660.

70. *C*, I, 14-20, 72-6 and *MEW*, XXIII, 19-28, 86-90. Also see below, Section VIII of this chapter.

71. There is no mention of "inevitable results" in the German, 'Es handelt sich um diese Gesetze selbst, um diese mit eherner Notwendigkeit wirkenden und sich durchsetzenden Tendenzen." *C*, I, 8-9 and *MEW*, XXIII, 12. Also see McMurtry, p. 170n. Nor is there mention of "inexorability" at *C*, I, 763 and *MEW*, XXIII, 791.

72. 'Marx to Editor of "Otechestvenniye Zapiski" in Nov. 1878', *SC*, pp. 312-3 and *MEW*, XIX, 108-11. K.R. Popper, *Conjectures and Refutations,* New York, Harper & Row, 1968, pp. 337-9. 'Marx to Domela-Nieuwenhuis on 22 Feb. 1881', *SC*, pp. 337, 339 and *MEW*, XXXV, 160, 161. *C*, I, 523 and *MEW*, XXIII, 546. Marx insists that his method is comparative and empirical; see 'Marx to Engels on 9 Aug. 1862', *SC*, p. 135 and *MEW*, XXX, 274; and 'Marx to Engels on 24 Aug. 1867', *SC*, p. 192 and *MEW*, XXXI, 327. Marx even cites an example where similar historical events occurring under different conditions lead to quite different outcomes; 'Marx to Editor of "Otechestvenniye Zapiski" in Nov. 1878', *SC*, p. 313 and *MEW*, XIX, 111.

73. *C*, I, 10 and *MEW*, XXIII, 15-6. For a good discussion of these matters see P. Thomas, 'Marx and Science', *Political Studies,* XXIV (1976), pp. 1-23, esp. 10-2, 17-8. Thomas also argues that these 'inexorable' laws are appearances or masks peculiar to capitalist society which will eventually give way to conscious control of the productive forces. Also see my argument below in Sections VI and VIII of this chapter and in the Conclusion.

74. 'Marx to Kugelmann on 17 April 1871', *SC*, p. 264 and *MEW*, XXXIII, 209.

75. *C*, III, 175 , 196, 232ff. and *MEW*, XXV, 184, 206, 242ff. See also A. Heller, *The Theory of Need in Marx*, New York, St. Martin's, 1976, pp. 74-5, who seems to agree with this reading.

76. *G*, pp. 649-51 and *GKPO*, pp. 542-4. *CPE*, pp. 20-1 and *MEW*, XIII, 8-9. *C*, I, 8-10, 18-9 and *MEW*, XXIII, 12-6, 26-7.

77. *C*, III, 234-5, 792-3 and *MEW*, XXV, 244-5, 800-1. An argument that this is a metaphysical necessity is made by Z.A. Jordan, *The Evolution of Dialectical Materialism,* London and New York, Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1967, pp. 298ff. Gouldner, it seems to me, over-emphasizes the determinism that is to be found in Marx' later writings in order to make them fit the model of scientific Marxism. Gouldner distinguishes two issues: (1) the rise of capitalism in a specific country, which Gouldner admits is not inevitable for Marx, and (2) the development of capitalism once it does arise in a specific country. Here, Gouldner's view is that for Marx the laws of capitalist development are inevitable or inexorable. But Gouldner's sole argument for this is to quote those passages in *Capital* where 'inevitability' or 'inexorability' are found only in the English translation, not in the original German (see note 71 of this chapter and Gouldner, pp. 65, 223-4, 232-6). Moreover, Gouldner overlooks

Marx' discussion of countervailing forces, and he seems unaware of the methodological implications of the *Grundrisse* and *Capital.*

78. *CPE*, p. 21 and *MEW*, XIII, 9.

79. See , for example, C.G. Hempel, *Aspects of Scientific Explanation*, New York, Free Press, 1965, pp. 174, 232-4, 247-9. Also K.R. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, New York, Harper & Row, 1965, pp. 59-60.

80. On this issue see D-H. Ruben, 'Materialism and Dialectics' in *Issues in Marxist Philosophy:* Volume I: *Dialectics and Method*, ed. J. Mepham and D-H. Ruben, Sussex, Harvester, 1979, pp. 69-71. Also K. Megill, 'On Marx's Method', *Southern Journal of Philosophy*, IX (1971), pp. 61-6. For a discussion of laws as tendencies and the consequent difficulties involved for prediction even in the natural sciences, see R. Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory of Science*, Leeds, Leeds Books, 1975, pp. 91-142. On the other hand, McMurtry, pp. 211-17, does try, by reconstructing Marx' arguments, to formulate laws and predictions, and to test them.

81. See D.L. Hull, *Philosophy of the Biological Sciences*, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, 1974, pp. 49, 71.

82. The distinction between making history and predicting it implies a difference between predicting and understanding or explaining. We must be able to understand or explain the laws of society in order to use them to guide praxis. If we can do this, why can we not predict? Some philosophers of science argue that scientific explanation amounts to prediction - that if we can explain, then we can predict (see K.R. Popper, *The Open Society and its Enemies,* Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1963, II, 261-3; also C.G. Hempel and P. Oppenheim, 'The Logic of Scientific Explanation', in *Readings in the Philosophy of Science*, ed. H. Feigl and M. Brodbeck, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1953, pp. 319-52). Other philosophers of science, however, argue that especially in biology and history there is a sense of explanation which need not allow us to predict. Here, to give some of the necessary conditions for an event, but not the sufficient conditions is to give a significant explanation of the event. But without the sufficient conditions it would not be possible to predict the event (see W.B. Gallie, 'Explanations in History and the Genetic Sciences', in *Theories of History,* ed. P. Gardiner, Glencoe, Illinois, Free Press, 1959, pp. 386-401. Hull, pp. 90-7). It seems to me that Marx only outlines necessary conditions for a socialist revolution. Moreover, even if it is held that he has outlined the sufficient conditions, given all the difficulties discussed above, it would be most difficult to be sure that those conditions actually obtained in a given society at a particular time. Thus, successful prediction would be impossible, though Marx could explain the general possibility of a socialist revolution and certainly explain it after it had occurred.

83. 'Marx to Ruge in Sept. 1843', *MECW*, III, 142 and *MEW*,

I, 344. *C*, III, 327 and *MEW*, XXV, 339-40.

84. *C*, I, 183, 204, and also 43, 71, 178-82, 609 and *MEW*, XXIII, 198, 218, 57-8, 85, 193-7, 636. Also *C*, III, 623, 643, 645 and *MEW*, XXV, 636, 656, 658. Also K. Marx, *Theories of Surplus Value (TSV)*, ed. S. Ryazanskaya, Moscow, Progress, 1968, II, 245-7 and *MEW*, XXVI, Teil II, 244-6. Also *G*, pp. 91, 239, 298-302, 472, 485, 715 and *GKPO*, pp. 13, 151, 206-9, 376, 384-5, 607. Also *CPE*, p. 35 and *MEW*, XIII, 22-3. For arguments that Marx is a social subjectivist, see Jordan, pp. 27-31. G. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. R. Livingstone, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1971, pp. 19, 130, but also xviff. A. Schmidt, *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, trans. B. Fowkes, London, NLB, 1971, pp. 35, 66, 77.

85. For example, the human body is both a natural presupposition of, and constantly reproduced by, a result of, production; see *G*, pp. 489-92, also 97, 459-60 and *GKPO*, pp. 389-92, 18, 363-4. Marx also distinguishes between natural and acquired needs and capacities; *C*, I, 349-50 and *MEW*, XXIII, 370; *G*, p. 325 and *GKPO*, p. 231; 'Critique of the Gotha Program' in *Marx-Engels Reader*, p. 530 and *MEW*, XIX, 21. Division of labor can also have a social or natural origin; *G*, p. 99 and *GKPO*, p. 20. *C*, I, 351 and *MEW*, XXIII, 372.

86. 'Gotha', p. 526 and *MEW*, XIX, 16. *G*, pp. 105, 251, 489-90 and *GKPO*, pp. 76, 162, 389. F. Engels, *Dialectics of Nature*, trans. C. Dutt, New York, International, 1940, pp. 279ff. and *MEW*, XX, 444ff.

87. *C*, I, 372n and *MEW*, XXIII, 392n. Also *TSV*, III, 294-5 and *MEW*, XXVI, Teil III, 289. Marx does admit that there are analogies between nature's development and human technology; nevertheless these belong to the study of biology. Marx claims that Darwin provides the natural scientific basis for the class struggle in history; see 'Marx to Lassalle on 16 Jan. 1861', *SC*, p. 123 and *MEW*, XXX, 578.

88. *C*, I, 177-8, 512 and *MEW*, XXIII, 192-3, 534-5. *G*, pp. 91-3 and *GKPO*, pp. 12-4. 'Marx to Kugelmann on 11 July 1868', *SC*, p. 209 and *MEW*, XXXII, 553. Material conditions condition the context and content of our needs and consciousness; they do not directly determine the subjective processes involved.

89. We can know and use untransformed material in production; *C*, I, 181 and *MEW*, XXIII, 196. Also Darwinian biology studies prehuman nature; *C*, I, 372n and *MEW*, XXIII, 392n. See Schmidt, pp. 10, 15-6, 27-8, 30-2, 50, 56, 58, 200. Jordan, pp. 27, 29, 31.

90. *G*, pp. 104-6, 460-1, 776 and *GKPO*, pp. 24-6, 364-5, 662. In claiming that human anatomy is key to the anatomy of the ape, Marx seems to have Cuvier in mind. Cuvier claimed that from a single bone he could make out the essential nature of the entire animal. He could do this because the organization and interconnection of the overall

anatomical structure is reflected in each of its parts. However, to understand this structure in lower, less developed stages one must first understand the higher, fully developed stage. For a discussion of this, see G.W.F. Hegel, *Hegel's Philosophy of Nature*, trans. M.J. Petry, London, Allen & Unwin, 1970, III, 178-84 and *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. H. Glockner, Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, Fromman, 1965ff., IX, 676-84.

91. *C*, I, 179-80 and *MEW*, XXIII, 194-5. Furthermore, this method of studying prehuman nature is facilitated by the fact (contrary to the *GI* where Marx only admitted to a few "Australian coral islands of recent origin") that a considerable amount of untransformed nature still exists.

92. *C*, I, 72, 632 and *MEW*, XXIII, 86, 660. The passage concerning unchanging laws of nature has been quoted above; see note 69 of this chapter.

93. *C*, I, 215 and *MEW*, XXIII, 229.

94. *C*, I, 181 and *MEW*, XXIII, 196. 'Marx to Engels on 25 March 1868', *SC*, p. 202 and *MEW*, XXXII, 53.

95. *G*, pp. 100-2 and *GKPO*, pp. 21-3. *C*, I, 75 and *MEW*, XXIII, 89. One reading of the *Theses on Feuerbach (TF)* is that Marx held that all knowing involved a practical transformation of the object known (*TF, MECW*, V, 3-5 and *MEW*, III, 5-7). Thus it would be difficult to gain knowledge of untransformed nature. Despite the fact that this position is clearly rejected for theoretical knowledge in the *Grundrisse* , some scholars see it as Marx' general view (Schmidt, pp. 50, 55, 115-6, 127. Jordan, pp. 29, 31). However, for Marx, technical (as opposed to theoretical) knowledge does involve transformation of the object (*G*, pp. 101, 705-6 and *GKPO*, pp. 22, 592-4).

96. *G*, p. 331 and *GKPO*, p. 237. In *C*, I, 19 and *MEW*, XXIII, 27, Marx says: "the life of the subject matter is ideally reflected as in a mirror ... "

97. 'Engels to Schmidt on 1 Nov. 1891', *SC*, p. 439 and *MEW*, XXXVIII, 204.

98. *G*, pp. 101, 110-1 and *GKPO*, pp. 22, 30-1.

99. *EPM, MECW*, III, 300-2 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 540-2. This is the view of Schmidt, p. 56.

100. *G*, pp. 91-3, 305-306n and *GKPO*, pp. 12-5, 212-3n. However, factors which transform subjects and their praxis do transform production and thus the world; *TSV*, I, 288 and *MEW*, XXVI, Teil I, 260. *G*, pp. 711-2 and *GKPO*, pp. 599-600.

101. *C*, I, 36 and *MEW*, XXIII, 50. *G*, p. 409 and *GKPO*, pp. 312-3.

102. *EPM, MECW*, III, 300-2 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 540-2. In some places Marx holds that even in praxis only form not substance is changed; *G*, pp. 360-1 and *GKPO*, pp. 265-6. *C*, I, 71 and *MEW*, XXIII, 85.

103. *C*, I, 71ff. and *MEW*, XXIII, 85ff.

104. *EPM, MECW*, III, 300-2, 337 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 540-2, 579. *GI, MECW*, V, 36-7, 40, 53-4 and *MEW*, III, 26-7, 43-4, 38.

105. Some scholars think Marx accepts an unknown thing-in-itself; Jordan, pp. 27-31. Schmidt, pp. 32, 50, 56, 66, 97. Also see above, Chapter 1, Section IVa and Chapter 2, Section III.

106. *G*, p. 101 and *GKPO*, p. 22. *GI, MECW*, V, 264n, 273-4 and *MEW*, III, 274n, 254-5. 'Engels to Marx on 6 Nov. 1868', and 'Marx to Engels on 7 Nov. 1868', *SC*, p. 217 and *MEW*, XXXII, 195, 197-8. J. Dietzgen, 'The Nature of Human Brain-Work' in *The Positive Outcome of Philosophy*, trans. W.W. Craik, Chicago, Charles Kerr, 1928, pp. 102-3; for the German see *Das Wesen der menschlichen Kopfarbeit,* Stuttgart, J.H.W. Dietz Nachf., 1903, pp. 71-2.

107. *G*, p. 106 and *GKPO*, pp. 26-7.

108. *G*, pp. 409-10 and *GKPO*, p. 313.

109. *C*, 1, 47, 50, 83, 95 and *MEW*, XXIII, 62, 65, 98, 110.

110. *Reading Capital*, pp. 35-6, 40-3, 54, 87, 189-94. Althusser's discussion of these epistemological issues is intended to emphasize Marx' rupture with his earlier views. *C*, III, 25 and *MEW*, XXV, 33. *G*, p. 106 and *GKPO*, pp. 26-7.

111. *G*, pp. 90, 100, 106, 154, 164, 310 and *GKPO*, pp. 11, 21-2, 26-7, 72, 82, 217. *C*, I, 19 and *MEW*, XXIII, 27.

112. *G*, pp. 687 and *GKPO*, p. 579. *TSV*, I, 171 and *MEW*, XXVI, Teil I, 141. *C*, I, 37-8, 57, 72 and *MEW*, XXIII, 51-2, 71-2, 86.

113. *G*, pp. 449-50 and *GKPO*, p. 353.

114. *G*, pp. 104, 106, 163-4 and *GKPO*, pp. 24-5, 26, 80-1.

115. See Engels' discussion of the views of Sombart and Schmidt in his 'Supplement' to Volume III of *Capital* (*C* , III, 894-6 and *MEW*, XXV, 904-6).

116. *EPM, MECW*, III, 284-6, 288-93 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 524-6, 528-33.

117. See above, Chapter 2, Section I.

118. *C*, III, 817 and *MEW*, XXV, 825. 'Marx to Engels on 27 June 1867', *SC*, p. 191 and *MEW*, XXXI, 313. 'Marx to Kugelmann on 11 July 1868', *SC*, p. 210 and *MEW*, XXXII, 553.

119. *G*, pp. 255, 421n and *GKPO*, pp. 166, 323n. *C*, I, 542 and *MEW*, XXIII, 564. *C*, III, 43, 47-8, 168 and *MEW*, XXV, 53, 57-8, 178. *TSV*, III, 515 and *MEW*, XXVI, Teil III, 504.

120. *EPM, MECW*, III, 279-81 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 520-1.

121. *G*, p. 101 and *GKPO*, p. 22.

122. *TSV*, I, 171 and *MEW*, XXVI, Teil I, 141. *C*, I, 47 and *MEW*, XXIII, 62.

123. *C*, I, 71 and *MEW*, XXIII, 85. Seigel also discusses this shift in Marx' concept of essence and comes to similar conclusions; see

J. Seigel, *Marx's Fate: The Shape of a Life*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978, pp. 195, 201-2, 212, 304, 317-24, 359-61.

124. *C*, I, 76 and *MEW*, XXIII, 90. Also *CPE*, p. 49 and *MEW*, XIII, 34-5.

125. G.W.F. Hegel, *The Logic of Hegel*, trans. W. Wallace, London, Oxford University Press, 1904, pp. 91-4 and *Sämtliche Werke*, VIII, 133-6. Also *Logic*, pp. 499-500 and *Logik*, II, 122-4.

126. In *C*, I, 316 and *MEW*, XXIII, 335, Marx says: "the apparent motions of the heavenly bodies are not intelligible to any but him, who is acquainted with their real motions, motions which are not directly perceptible by the senses." See also *Value, Price and Profit*, ed. E.M. Aveling, New York, International, 1974, pp. 30, 37 and *MEW*, XVI, 122-3, 129. For a detailed study of similarities between the way in which Marx employs the concepts of essence and appearance and the way these concepts were employed by Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton, and for an argument that Marx' use of these concepts derives from classical physics and mathematics as much or more than from Hegel's *Logic*, see J. Witt-Hansen, 'Marx's Method in Social Science, and its Relationship to Classical and Modern Physics and Mathematics', *Poznań Studies*, III (1977), pp. 1-41.

127. *C*, I, 77-9 and *MEW*, XXIII, 91-3. *G*, pp. 705-6 and *GKPO*, p. 593.

128. Marx says: "As soon as labour in the direct form has ceased to be the great well-spring of wealth, labor time ceases and must cease to be its measure, and hence exchange value must cease to be the measure of use value." See *G*, p. 705 and *GKPO*, p. 593. Also, "Within the cooperative society based on common ownership of the means of production, the producers do not exchange their products; just as little does the labour employed on the products appear as the value of these products . . . " See 'Gotha', pp. 529, also 530 and *MEW*, XIX, 19, 20.

129. *C*, I, 76-9 and *MEW*, XXIII, 91-4.

130. *C*, I, 71-6 and *MEW*, XXIII, 85-9.

131. 'Comments on Mill', *MECW*, III, 227-8 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 462-3. *EPM*, *MECW*, III, 271-2, 279-80 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 511-2, 520-1.

132. 'Notes on Wagner', p. 207 and *MEW*, XIX, 375-6.

133. *Ibid.*

134. 'Notes on Wagner', pp. 200-1 and *MEW*, XIX, 371.

135. 'Notes on Wagner', p. 198 and *MEW*, XIX, 369.

136. See 'Notes on Wagner', pp. 183, 206 and *MEW*, XIX, 358, 374.

137. 'Gotha', p. 529 and *MEW*, XIX, 19-20.

138. 'Notes on Wagner', pp. 198, 189, 199 and *MEW*, XIX, 368-9, 361-2, 369.

139. Sayer, pp. 98, 81.

140. 'Notes on Wagner', pp. 169-70.
141. *G*, p. 101 and *GKPO*, p. 21.
142. *C*, I, 7-8 and *MEW*, XXIII, 11-2.
143. 'Notes on Wagner', p. 198 and *MEW*, XIX, 369.
144. *G*, pp. 449-50 and *GKPO*, p. 353.
145. See also Heller, p. 128, who seems to agree that Marx' science would wither away. Natural sciences like astronomy, of course, would not wither away since apparent motion could never coincide with real motion.
146. *C*, I, 14-20 and *MEW*, XXIII, 19-28.
147. *G*, pp. 705-6, 712 and *GKPO*, pp. 593, 599-600.
148. G.A. Cohen, *Karl Marx's Theory of History*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1978, pp. 326-44. Also see Rosdolsky, pp. 552-62.
149. Cohen, pp. 329, 342. Also see above, Chapter 2, Sections II and III.
150. See, for example, T.S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd edition, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1970, pp. 62-4, 112-3. *GI*, *MECW*, V, 59-60, 363 and *MEW*, III, 46-7, 347. *G*, p. 110 and *GKPO*, p. 30.
151. *Dissertation*, *MECW*, I, 45, 67-73 and *MEW*, Erg. I, 227, 297-305.
152. *C*, I, 79 and *MEW*, XXIII, 93.
153. *TF*, *MECW*, V, 3 and *MEW*, III, 5
154. *G*, pp. 705-6, 712 and *GKPO*, pp. 593, 599-600.
155. Kuhn, p. 79.
156. *C*, I, 59-60 and *MEW*, XXIII, 73-4. Marx claims that later developments explain earlier ones in economics, religion, and anatomy (*G*, pp. 105-6, and *GKPO*, pp. 25-6). He even claims that this is the case in mathematics (*G*, pp. 460-1 and *GKPO*, pp. 364-5. Also see J. Witt-Hansen, 'Reflections on Marxian Dialectics', *Poznań Studies*, II [1976], pp. 81ff. Marx in his *Mathematical Manuscripts*, studied the historical development of the differential calculus and again argued, Witt-Hansen claims, that later developments are key to understanding earlier ones).
157. *C*, I, 77-9 and *MEW*, XXIII, 91-3.
158. S. Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, trans. J. Strachey, New York, Norton, 1962, pp. 60-1; for the German see *Gesammelte Werke*, London, Imago, 1952ff., XIV, 472-3.
159. R. Keat and J. Urey, *Social Theory as Science*, London and Boston, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975, esp. Chapters 2 and 5. See also D-H. Ruben, *Marxism and Materialism*, Sussex, Harvester, 1977, pp. 133-9, 149-54. See also Bhaskar, *A Realist Theory of Science*.
160. The concept of essence found in *Capital* is, we have seen, unlike the concept of essence found in 1844; rather it is much more like

that found in the *Theses on Feuerbach*, where Marx held that the real basis of what philosophers have conceived as essence was in fact "the ensemble of social relations". In *Capital*, however, we must add that we only need and have such essences when social relations are fetishized. In other words, essences are not metaphysical entities, but reflections of reality to be overcome. See *TF*, *MECW*, V, 4 and *MEW*, III, 534.

161. *C*, I, 71 and *MEW*, XXIII, 85. Keat and Urey deny that social science can wither away (p. 195). Nor do they notice that for Marx, as phenomena come to coincide with reality, it will not be necessary to posit unobservable theoretical entities or essences. This makes it quite difficult to counter the charge that Marx' views are metaphysical, especially if Marx' theory will not allow for prediction. Keat and Urey, it seems, tend to see Marx' theoretical entities as permanent existences.

162. Recently there has been a good deal of debate over whether or not Marx' theory of value is metaphysical. For an impressive analysis of Marx' theory of value which I have found helpful in many ways, see S. Moore, 'The Metaphysical Argument in Marx's Labour Theory of Value', *Cahiers de L'Institut de Science Économique Appliquée*, VII (1963), pp. 73-98. Moore, however, thinks that Marx' analysis of commodity fetishism contradicts his analysis of value. To establish his theory of value Marx claims that exchange relations are relations between things that presuppose a common property (abstract labor) embodied in the things themselves, whereas in his analysis of commodity fetishism Marx appears to turn around and to assert that this was a delusion - that exchange relations are in fact nothing but concealed relations between persons that merely appear as relations between things and thus that the need for a common property to explain exchange relations was an illusion. Moore finds this problematic and thinks it a contradiction. Indeed it is a contradiction. It has to be if it is to be the case that when fetishism is overcome abstract labor and exchange value will disappear. The theory of value explains the fetishized appearance of reality as a set of abstract relations between things and must do so if it is to explain given reality; however, all of this must dissolve when fetishism is overcome (see also Rosdolsky, pp. 124-6, 129). If this were not the case then Moore's attack would be correct. Moore also argues that both Marx' labor theory of value and his whole contrast between essence and appearance are metaphysical; see also S. Moore 'Marx and the Origin of Dialectical Materialism', *Inquiry*, XIV (1971), pp. 420-9. I agree with Moore that Marx' views in *Capital* are metaphysical in the sense that they are not empirically testable, but I disagree with Moore's view that essences are to be understood in *Capital* as they were in 1844-5.

For an argument against Moore's position that Marx' theory of value is metaphysical, see C.J. Arthur, 'Labour, Marx's Concrete

Universal', *Inquiry*, XXI (1978), pp. 87-103. See also T. Carver, 'Marx's Commodity Fetishism', *Inquiry*, XVIII (1975), pp. 39-63. See also Colletti, pp. 278-83. Also L. Colletti, *From Rousseau to Lenin*, trans. J. Merrington and J. White, New York and London, Monthly Review Press, 1972, pp. 77ff., 91. Also L. Kołakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, trans. P.S. Falla, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1978, I, 325-34. For a valuable defense of Marx' theory of value against the charge of metaphysics, see I.I. Rubin, *Essays on Marx's Theory of Value*, trans. M. Samardźija and F. Perlman, Detroit, Black & Red, 1972.

163. See, for example, P. Feyerabend, *Against Method*, London, NLB, 1975, pp. 64-5, 171-214, 302-5. Also Kuhn, pp. 77-80, 144-59. Also for a detailed and insightful argument that Marx employs the same procedures as those of classical physics, though the author does admit that Marx' science is not testable through prediction, see Witt-Hansen, 'Marx's Method in Social Science'.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. G. Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness*, trans. R. Livingstone, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1971, pp. 3-4, 24 (note 6), 199-202.

2. A. Schmidt, *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, trans. B. Fowkes, London, NLB, 1971, pp. 16, 26-7, 51-61, 166ff. Also I. Fetscher, *Marx and Marxism*, New York, Herder and Herder, 1971, pp. 149-51, 174-5. Also Z.A. Jordan, *The Evolution of Dialectical Materialism*, London and New York, Macmillan and St. Martin's, 1967, pp. 3-15, 25-7, 56, 321-2, 325-9, 333. See also L. Kołakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, trans. P.S. Falla, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1978, I, 400-2. There are of course other scholars who think that there are no differences at all between Marx and Engels on any of these matters.

3. 'Engels to Starkenburg on 25 Jan. 1894' in *Marx Engels Selected Correspondence (SC)*, Moscow, Progress, 1965, p. 467; for the German see *Marx Engels Werke (MEW)*, Berlin, Dietz, 1972ff., XXXIX, 206-7. 'Engels to Schmidt on 27 Oct. 1890', *SC*, p. 421 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 490.

4. See, for example, *German Ideology (GI)* in *Karl Marx Frederick Engels Collected Works (MECW)*, New York, International, 1975ff., V, 393-4 and *MEW*, III, 377-8. Also 'Critique of the Gotha Program' in *Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd edition, ed. R.C. Tucker, New York, Norton, 1978, p. 530 and *MEW*, XIX, 21. Also see above, Chapter 2, Section III and note 65.

5. Engels admits that he and Marx overstated their case in reacting against their opponents; 'Engels to Bloch on 21-2 Sept. 1890', *SC*, pp. 417-9 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 462-5. See also 'Engels to Schmidt on 5 Aug. 1890', *SC*, pp. 415-6 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 436-7. 'Engels to Schmidt on 27 Oct. 1890', *SC*, pp. 423-4 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 492-3. 'Engels to Mehring on 14 July 1893', *SC*, p. 459 and *MEW*, XXXIX, 96. *GI*, *MECW*, V, 45, 54, 56 and *MEW*, III, 32, 38, 40. Also see above, Chapter 3, Section III.

6. *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy (LF)* in *Marx & Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy (MEPP)*, ed. L.S. Feuer, Garden City, Anchor, 1959, pp. 225-6 and *MEW*, XXI, 292-3. *Anti-Dühring (AD)*, ed. C. Dutt, New York, International, 1939, p. 16 and MEW, XX, 11. *Dialectics of Nature (DN)*, trans. C. Dutt, New York, International, 1940, pp. 26-7,

237-9, 313-4 and *MEW*, XX, 348-9, 492-3, 529.

7. *AD*, pp. 42-3 and *MEW*, XX, 33. *DN*, pp. 175, 228 and *MEW*, XX, 513, 479. *LF*, pp. 210, 215 and *MEW*, XXI, 277, 282. That thought itself is material is a doctrine which even Lenin stopped short of in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*; see V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, ed. C. Dutt, Moscow, Progress, 1968, XIV, 244-5. For a good discussion of Engels' materialism, see Jordan, pp. 151-66. That Engels does not see his position as reductionist, see *DN*, pp. 174-5 and *MEW*, XX, 513.

8. Marx did however point out that such a position had been held by earlier philosophers; see *Holy Family, MECW*, IV, 127, 129 and *MEW*, II, 135, 136.

9. *LF*, pp. 237-8 and *MEW*, XXI, 303. *DN*, pp. 313-4 and *MEW*, XX, 529-30. 'Engels to Bloch on 21-2 Sept. 1890', *SC*, p. 418 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 464. 'Engels to Mehring on 14 July 1893', *SC*, pp. 459-60 and *MEW*, XXXIX, 96-7.

10. This point emerges clearly in *GI, MECW*, V, 36 and *MEW*, III, 26. Also *Grundrisse* (G), trans. M. Nicolaus, London, Allen Lane, 1973, pp. 110-1; see *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (GKPO)*, Frankfurt, Europäische Verlagsanstalt, no date, pp. 30-1, for the German. 'Notes on Adolph Wagner' in *Texts on Method*, trans. T. Carver, New York, Barnes and Noble, 1975, pp. 190-1 and *MEW*, XIX, 362-4. Also see above, Chapter 3, Section III and note 53.

11. *LF*, pp. 230-4 and *MEW*, XXI, 296-300. 'Engels to Bloch on 21-2 Sept. 1890', *SC*, pp. 417-8 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 463-4. 'Engels to Starkenburg on 25 Jan. 1894', *SC*, p. 467 and *MEW*, XXXIX, 206-7. However, Engels understands historical materialism as a guide to study; he does not speak about prediction; see 'Engels to Schmidt on 5 Aug. 1890', *SC*, p. 416 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 436.

12. 'Engels to Bloch on 21-2 Sept. 1890', *SC*, pp. 417-8 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 463-4. 'Engels to Schmidt on 5 Aug. 1890', *SC*, pp. 415-6 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 436-7. 'Engels to Starkenburg on 25 Jan. 1894', *SC*, pp. 467 and *MEW*, XXXIX, 206-7.

13. *DN*, pp. 173-4, 231-4 and *MEW*, XX, 499, 487-9. *LF*, pp. 228-31 and *MEW*, XXI, 294-7. 'Engels to Schmidt on 27 Oct. 1890', *SC*, p. 425 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 494. 'Engels to Mehring on 14 July 1893', *SC*, p. 460 and *MEW*, XXXIX, 98.

14. 'Engels to Schmidt on 27 Oct. 1890', *SC*, pp. 423-4 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 492-3.

15. For an example of Engels' view that natural conditions are more fundamental than social ones, see his discussion of the death of our solar system; *DN*, p. 20 and *MEW*, XX, 324. *LF*, p. 200 and

MEW, XXI, 268.

16. *GI, MECW*, V, 36, 45, 78-9, 438 and *MEW*, III, 26, 31-2, 76, 424. 'Engels to Bloch on 21-2 Sept. 1890', *SC*, p. 418 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 465.

17. See, for example, Marx' discussion of the uneven development of consciousness and material conditions; *G*, pp. 109-11 and *GKPO*, pp. 29-31. Also see above, Chapter 3, Section III.

18. *LF*, pp. 199-202 and *MEW*, XXI, 267-70.

19. *LF*, pp. 225-6 and *MEW*, XXI, 292-3. *AD*, p.17 and *MEW*, XX, 12. *DN*, pp. 26-7 and *MEW*, XX, 348-9.

20. *LF*, pp. 200-2, 228-9 and *MEW*, XXI, 268-70, 294-6. *AD*, pp. 26-7, 30-1, 43-4 and *MEW*, XX, 20, 23-4, 34-5. *DN*, pp. 178-9, 322 and *MEW*, XX, 514-5, 518.

21. *G*, pp. 100ff. and *GKPO*, pp. 21ff. Also Chapter 3, Section I.

22. *DN*, pp. 213-4 and *MEW*, XX, 496-7. *Capital (C)*, ed. F. Engels, New York, International, 1967, II, 14-5 and *MEW*, XXIV, 22-3. Also *C*, I, 4 and *MEW*, XXIII, 37-8. Also see the comments of L. Althusser, *Reading Capital*, trans. B. Brewster, London, NLB, 1970, pp. 147-57.

23. *AD*, pp. 27-8, 98-9 and *MEW*, XX, 20-1, 82-3. *DN*, pp. 158-9 and *MEW*, XX, 507. *LF*, pp. 227-8 and *MEW*, XXI, 294.

24. Marx' discussion of method in the Introduction to the *Critique of Political Economy* (which is properly the Introduction to the *Grundrisse*) was written in 1857-8 but was only published in 1903. Judging from the contents of Engels' review of 1859, however, it certainly would seem that he was familiar with this Introduction. In what follows, I assume that he was.

25. F. Engels, 'Karl Marx: *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*' in *Critique of Political Economy*, ed. M. Dobb, London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1971, pp. 224-5 and *MEW*, XIII, 473-4. See also *DN*, pp. 237-9, 291 and *MEW*, XX, 492-3, 452.

26. *G*, pp. 100-8 and *GKPO*, pp. 21-8. Also see above, Chapter 3, Sections I and III.

27. *GI, MECW*, V, 37, 53-4 and *MEW*, III, 27, 37-8. Also see above, Chapter 3, Section I. Moreover, in the *Poverty of Philosophy* Marx in attacking Proudhon's historical method says: "How indeed could the single logical formula of movement, of sequence, of time, explain the structure of society, in which all relations coexist simultaneously and support one another?" (*Poverty of Philosophy, MECW*, VI, 167 and *MEW*, IV, 131). It is clear that the historical method is not the logical method and it is just as clear that Engels' historical method as described in Section I of the present chapter would

not be able to explain the structure, the synchronicity, of social relations. On this issue, see also L. Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. B. Brewster, New York, Pantheon, 1969, pp. 117-28.

28. *LF*, pp. 225-6 and *MEW*, XXI, 292-3. *DN*, p. 313 and *MEW*, XX, 529. Preface to *Capital*, III, 13-4 and *MEW*, XXV, 20. 'Engels to Kautsky on 20 Sept. 1884', *SC*, p. 379 and *MEW*, XXXVI, 209. 'Engels to Schmidt on 12 Mar. 1895', *SC*, pp. 482-4 and *MEW*, XXXIX, 431-3.

29. After a long analysis, Zelený finally tells us, correctly, that the historical method presupposes and follows upon the logical method (J. Zelený, *The Logic of Marx*, trans. T. Carver, Oxford, Blackwell, 1980, p. 70). But this was not always clear in his preceding analysis, which began by telling us that Engels' view (in which the logical method parallels the historical) is a "simplified explanation" of Marx' views (p. 35). Indeed, Zelený never tells us that Engels is wrong about Marx' method in the *Grundrisse*. At several points, Zelený sounds as if the logical method develops along with, parallels, or even follows upon the historical method (pp. 40, 46, 51). Nor does Schmidt seem to see that Engels is wrong here (see A. Schmidt, *History and Structure: An Essay in Hegelian-Marxist and Structuralist Theories of History*, trans. J. Herf, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1981, pp. 34-7).

30. *LF*, pp. 208-9 and *MEW*, XXI, 276. *DN*, pp. 159-61 and *MEW*, XX, 507-8. 'Engels to Marx on 6 Nov. 1868', *SC*, pp. 216-7 and *MEW*, XXXII, 195. 'Engels to Marx on 28 May 1876', *SC*, p. 307 and *MEW*, XXXIV, 19. Also see Lukács' criticism of Engels' argument, Lukács, pp. xix-xx, 131-3. For Marx' position see his answer to Engels' letter of 6 Nov. 1868; 'Marx to Engels on 7 Nov. 1868', *SC*, p. 217 and *MEW*, XXXII, 197-8. Also *GI*, *MECW*, V, 264n, 273-4 and *MEW*, III, 274n, 254-5.

31. *DN*, pp. 153, 173-4, 313 and *MEW*, XX, 472-3, 499, 529, See also the 1892 Introduction to *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific* in *MEPP*, p. 52 and *MEW*, XXII, 297.

32. *DN*, pp. 172, 209, 279ff. and *MEW*, XX, 498, 565, 444ff.

33. *LF*, p. 208 and *MEW*, XXI, 276. *DN*, pp. 171-2 and *MEW*, XX, 497-8. See also the 1892 Introduction to *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*, p. 51 and *MEW*, XXII, 296.

34. *LF*, p. 200, 225-6 and *MEW*, XXI, 267-8, 292-3. 'Engels to Schmidt on 1 Nov. 1891', *SC*, p. 439 and *MEW*, XXXVII, 204.

35. *C*, I, 309, also 18-20 and *MEW*, XXIII, 327, 26-8. 'Marx to Engels on 22 June 1877', *SC*, pp. 188-9 and *MEW*, XXXI, 306. *AD*, p. 13 and *MEW*, XX, 9. 'Engels to Marx on 16 June 1867', *SC*, p. 187 and *MEW*, XXXI, 304. 'Engels to Marx on 14 July 1858', *SC*, pp. 108-9 and *MEW*, XXIX, 337-8.

36. See, for example, Lukács, pp. 38, 130, 234, but also xvi. Schmidt, pp. 15, 27-8, 30-2, 58, 200 (note 30), but also 69-70, 96, 167, 179. Jordan, pp. 27-34, 93-4. L. Kołakowski, 'Karl Marx and the Classical Definition of Truth' in *Toward a Marxist Humanism*, trans. J.Z. Peel, New York, Grove, 1968, pp. 38-66; also *Main Currents of Marxism*, I, 400-2.

At the other end of the spectrum, orthodox Marxists correctly recognize that after 1845 Marx no longer held that consciousness plays a role in constituting the object and thus that Marx could accept a dialectic in nature and a version of the reflection theory. But from here the orthodox go on to extend to Marx Engels' notion that consciousness is material and that its processes are determined. At the same time, they simply ignore the *Grundrisse*'s discussion of method, i.e., Marx' view that it is only the construction of a structure of categories which reflects reality. For these Marxists there are no differences at all between Marx and Engels; see, for example, J. Hoffman, *Marxism and the Theory of Praxis*, New York, International, 1976, which also contains an interesting critique of praxis theorists (i.e., Lukács, Schmidt, and others). On the other hand, D-H. Ruben, *Marxism and Materialism*, Sussex, Harvester, 1977, esp. pp. 149-54 does try to argue that Marx' discussion of method in the *Grundrisse* is compatible with at least certain aspects of an orthodox reflection theory. But in doing so Ruben misreads Engels; he denies that Engels holds that consciousness is material and thus that thought processes are determined (pp. 5-6), and he sidesteps any discussion of shifts in Marx' thought (p. 115).

37. *GI*, *MECW*, V, 44-5 and *MEW*, III, 30-2. *G*, pp. 101-2 and *GKPO*, pp. 22-3. *C*, I, 75 and *MEW*, XXIII, 89. Also see above, Chapter 2, Section III. Also Chapter 3, Section V.

38. On these issues I am in agreement with S. Moore, 'Marx and the Origin of Dialectical Materialism', *Inquiry*, XVI (1971), pp. 421-2, 427 (note 3), 428-9 (note 16), but I do not agree with Moore in his claim that Marx' and Engels' methods "do not differ significantly" (p. 426).

CONCLUSION

1. For a discussion of other shifts in Marx' thought, see P.J. Kain, *Schiller, Hegel, and Marx,* Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1982.

2. 'Marx to Annenkov on 28 Dec. 1846' in *Marx Engels Selected Correspondence (SC)*, ed. S. Ryasanskaya, Moscow, Progress, 1965, p. 35; for the German see *Marx Engels Werke (MEW)*, Berlin, Dietz, 1972ff., XXVII, 452-3.

3. Compare K. Marx, *Grundrisse (G)*, trans M. Nicolaus, London, Allen Lane, 1973, pp. 693-705; for the German see *Grundrisse der Kritik der politischen Ökonomie (GKPO)*, Frankfurt, Europäische Verlagsanstalt, no date, pp. 585-93 with K. Marx, *Capital (C)*, ed. F. Engels, New York, International, 1967, I, 72-3 and *MEW*, XXIII, 86-7.

4. *C*, I, 74-5 and *MEW*, XXIII, 88-9. Schmidt argues against Althusser in a similar fashion; see A. Schmidt, *History and Structure: An Essay on Hegelian-Marxist and Structuralist Theories of History*, trans. J. Herf, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1981, pp. 61-2, 82.

5. *C*, I, 76-9 and *MEW*, XXIII, 90-3.

6. *G*, p. 706 and *GKPO*, p. 594.

7. *G*, pp. 162, also 158 and *GKPO*, pp. 79, 75.

8. *C*, III, 820 and *MEW*, XXV, 828. Also *G*, pp. 611-2 and *GKPO*, pp. 505-6.

9. *C*, I, 78-81 and *MEW*, XXIII, 92-5. Also K. Marx, *Civil War in France* in *Writings on the Paris Commune*, ed. H. Draper, New York and London, Monthly Review Press, 1971, p. 77 and *MEW*, XVII, 343.

10. *G*, p. 325, also 706 and *GKPO*, pp. 231, 593.

11. *G*, p. 92 and *GKPO*, pp. 13-4.

12. *G*, pp. 487-8 and *GKPO*, p. 387.

13. *G*, pp. 515, also 708 and *GKPO*, pp. 415, 595-6. Also see C. Gould, *Marx's Social Ontology*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1980, pp. 125-8.

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